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HOLBERG.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

A Collection

OF THE

MOST INSTRUCTIVE AND AMUSING

LIVES

EVER PUBLISHED,

WRITTEN BY THE PARTIES THEMSELVES.

WITH BRIEF INTRODUCTIONS, AND COMPENDIOUS SEQUELS CARRYING ON THE COURSE OF EVENTS TO THE DEATH OF EACH WRITER.

VOLUME XII.—LEWIS HOLBERG.

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MEMOIRS

OF

Ludvig
LEWIS HOLBERG.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

IN LATIN,

AND NOW FIRST

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

LONDON: 1827.

PUBLISHED BY HUNT AND CLARKE,

YORK-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN.

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PREFACE.

HOLBERG is justly regarded by the Danes as the creator of their modern school of literature. His productions are but little known in this country, and still less in the more southern parts of Europe; but in the north of Europe there are few names which are held in greater esteem than that of the writer of the following memoirs. He devoted his whole life to literature, and acquired, in his own country, a distinguished reputation as a satirist, as a dramatic writer, as a national historian, and as an expounder of the principles of public law. His *Introduction to the Law of Nature and of Nations*, the germ of a more copious treatise on the same subject, and his *Journey to the World under Ground*, have been translated into English. The former of these works is little more than an abridgment of Puffendorf; the latter, though it is an obvious imitation of the *Gulliver* of SWIFT, and cannot therefore claim the praise of original invention, is nevertheless an amusing and instructive production. The work, which we now introduce to public notice, may be almost said to be rescued from oblivion by its annexation to this collection. It was pointed out to

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us as a work of talent by a friend, who to many higher claims to literary distinction unites an extensive acquaintance with northern literature; and it will be found, if we are not mistaken in our estimate of its merits, to be a very interesting addition to the stores of autobiography. It was published in the Latin language in the year 1737, together with a collection of Latin epigrams, in the form of three epistles addressed to an anonymous nobleman; and we believe that this is its first appearance in the costume of a modern language. As this account of the Life of HOLBERG was published in the lifetime of the writer, and was evidently intended for the information of the public, and not of his anonymous correspondent, we have thought it better, in the translation, to sink the epistolary form, and to suppose the writer to address the public, for whom his communications were really intended. This is the only liberty the translator has taken with the text, with the exception of the suppression of a few coarse pleasantries by which the fastidiousness of some readers might have been offended, and also of a considerable mass of quotations, for which, like the pedantic but pleasant author of the Anatomy of Melancholy, HOLBERG seems to have had an overweening affection. The latinity of HOLBERG is not remarkable for its purity, as the classical reader may suspect from certain heresies in point of taste to which he pleads guilty in his biography. The work, however, is characterised by a vein of

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good sense and original humour, which is wholly unaffected by imperfections of style, and which may be equally appreciated either in the original or through the medium of a translation.

We have only to add, by way of SEQUEL to the Life of HOLBERG, that he was created a baron by the king of Denmark in the year 1747; and that he died in the year 1754, having left the principal part of the property he had accumulated to the Academy of Knights at Soroe.

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THE

LIFE

OF

LEWIS HOLBERG.

I SHALL not imitate the example of those auto-biographers who entertain their readers with a circumstantial account of their pedigree; for, to say the truth, if I were desirous of commencing with a chapter on my ancestors, I should have some difficulty in finding materials for it, since my native town, Bergen in Norway, is, like Noah's ark, the receptacle of all living creatures. Thither, as to a common country, people of all nations, neighbouring and remote, are constantly repairing; and the intermarriages of these settlers with the natives of Bergen necessarily tend to impede the researches of our genealogists. I can do more, I believe, than most of my countrymen, towards establishing the antiquity of my family, for I can show that my mother's grandfather was a native of the place which gave me birth. His name was Lewis Munthe; he was bishop of Bergen, of noble rank, and the father of so numerous a progeny, that he may justly be classed among the patriarchs of Norway. As to my paternal relations, I candidly confess that I know nothing about them. My father, of blessed memory, rose from the ranks to the command of a regiment; and it may be inferred from this circumstance, that he was rather indebted

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to his personal merit than to his ancestry for his promotion. It is enough for me, that he always maintained the character of a just, brave, and pious man, and conducted himself through life with such prudence and propriety, as to deserve the esteem and affection of all who knew him, and especially of that distinguished hero Frederick Güldenlöve, under whom he served with some reputation in Norway. In the towns of Norway few men can boast of the antiquity of their families; in the country aboriginal Norwegians are to be found. There, many of the labourers are said to be legitimately descended from the lords of the soil; but, as they are not addicted to genealogical studies, they are happily, for the most part, ignorant of their illustrious origin. If it were otherwise, they might be reduced to the condition of the ruined and starving nobleman who exclaimed, "O! that I were a poor man, for I could then relieve my necessities by some plebeian occupation."

I was still at nurse when my father died, having left us a considerable property, which was unfortunately almost entirely destroyed by a fire which broke out in the middle of the night in a house adjoining my mother's. By this accident we should have been reduced to a state of the most abject poverty, had it not been for a few farm-houses which my father had purchased a short time before his death. The rent of these houses was scarcely sufficient to support a numerous family; but my mother managed it with such admirable economy, that after a period of nearly ten years she left the whole of this property unincumbered to her six surviving children.

On the death of my mother I was entered, at the age of ten years, among the stipendiary pupils of the Upland regiment; for it was at that time the practice in Norway to give pay to the children of

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officers, and to initiate them almost from the cradle in military tactics. In the Norwegian army petty officers who have ten men under their command are called corporals. I was made a corporal at starting, under the implied condition that I should receive instruction in the art military. This is a part of my history, however, which it may not be very prudent to divulge; since to be transformed from a petty officer into a professor of philosophy, and to exchange my rank of corporal for spiritual preferment, is a sort of Ovidian metamorphosis which might expose me to the risk of being sent back from my professorial chair to the camp, if the authorities were disposed to question my qualifications. I was sent by my guardian to Upland, to be instructed in military tactics; but as I had discovered a passion for literature from my earliest years, and had already made some trifling literary attempts, my relation Otto Munthe, to whose care I was intrusted, encouraged this propensity, and placed me under the tuition of the individual who taught his own children. This man delighted in birch, and never suffered a day to pass without inflicting corporal chastisement on his pupils. In other respects he was wholly unqualified for his situation; and I am glad to hear, especially for the sake of the Latin language, that he has since retired from it, for his inroads on the purity of the Roman idiom were as merciless as his daily attacks on the flesh of his scholars. I remember, among other instances of this man's elegant Latinity, that he used to place the particle *non* at the end of a sentence, so that instead of the phrase *Non possum tibi satisfacere*, he would say *Possum tibi satisfacere non*; a piece of stupidity for which alone he deserved more than all the punishment he ever inflicted on his pupils. If I had not fallen into the hands of this tyrant, I might have boasted, that

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during the whole period of my pupillage I had never once been flogged, for I was a great favourite with all my other masters, public as well as private. I remember on one occasion, when the usher of the second class in the public school at Bergen gave me a slight stroke on the hand with a cane, I was so indignant at receiving this punishment, that I turned fiercely upon him, and called him an old goat, a name by which the boys distinguished him from the other ushers, on account of the length of his beard. The good man bore this affront with dignified indifference, simply contenting himself with calling me a little blockhead, though, if any other boy had ventured to say as much, his resentment would certainly not have been confined within these moderate limits. Nothing worthy of mention occurred during the time I bore the rank of corporal, except that I never saw a farthing of the pay to which I was entitled, and I know not who received it in my name. My host, who had reckoned upon this pay as a reimbursement for the expenses of my board and education, finding that it went into some other channel, sent me home.

Shortly after my return, while I was staying at the house of a relation, named Krog, who was a captain in the army, a ridiculous circumstance occurred, which made a lasting impression on my memory. The captain had three sons, the youngest of whom slept in the same bed with the tutor, a sort of living spunge named Erasmus, who could imbibe a larger quantity of liquor than any other man in that country. It happened one night that Erasmus staggered into his chamber under the influence of his accustomed potations, and threw himself upon the bed without having previously divested himself of his clothes or boots. The boy, not approving this arrangement, got out of bed, crept quietly into the apartment where I slept with

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his brothers, and composed himself to rest at the foot of our bed. We had been in bed about an hour when I was awakened by a kick which I received from our new inmate. I immediately roused my companions, telling them that there was a ghost in the room; and our terror soon increased to such a degree that we imagined ourselves to be assailed by whole legions of spirits. The supposed devil at the foot of the bed, awakened by our murmurs, was seized with a similar panic, and, as he was alone, concluded that he was especially exposed to the assaults of the demons, and would therefore be the first morsel they would choose to devour. For some time he remained motionless and half dead with fear, expecting the approach of the enemy, until at length he ventured to quit his position, and approach our part of the bed. Whenever he made this attempt, however, our terrors increased, and we fancied that the devil and all his imps were let loose before us. In this manner we passed the whole night in a state of dreadful alarm; and I doubt not that if all the prayers with which we besieged the Deity on this occasion were collected, they would in point of bulk form a respectable liturgy. My companions, who were but moderately skilled in divinity, and knew very little by heart beyond the Lord's Prayer, had recourse to the graces commonly said before and after dinner. Among others, the formula—"God bless the food placed before us, and also that which is to follow," was repeated a hundred times; and the consciousness of the small stock of piety they possessed for the occasion increased the terrors of the supplicants. We were afraid of calling out for assistance, not merely from our apprehension of the devil, but on account of Erasmus, who would not have failed to inflict another kind of torture upon us the next day, had we interrupted his repose. Towards day-

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break, however, the spirit at the foot of the bed could restrain himself no longer, and jumping out, he exclaimed with the voice of a Stentor, "Help! help! master, there are ghosts and devils in our bed-room." Erasmus, whose blood was still in a state of feverish excitement from the effects of the last night's debauch, no sooner heard this exclamation than he became as cold as an icicle. He crossed himself devoutly, and lay trembling with fear until daylight revealed the true cause of all our alarms and misapprehensions. This incident led me to deny the existence of spirits, and to refer all the stories which are commonly told of them to mere illusions of the mind; and it is to such trifling circumstances as these, perhaps, that the transition from superstition to infidelity may be traced in the minds of a large portion of mankind. Men seldom observe much moderation in their opinions respecting the immaterial world; they either believe or reject every thing; they either suffer their imagination to gain an absurd ascendancy over their reason, or, having once detected the errors in which their imagination has involved them, they are apt to run into the other extreme, and to doubt even those truths which are attested by the most unexceptionable testimony. This is no doubt the reason why Catholics, whose credulity is unbounded so long as their faith in the corrupt superstitions of their church remains unshaken, are more liable than any other sect of religionists to fall into the opposite extreme of infidelity, when they have once broken from the trammels of priestcraft. Discreet persons will endeavour to steer a middle course, and avoid giving offence by professing moderate opinions on subjects which do not admit of indisputable evidence; for as Cicero observes, in speaking of the propriety of consulting the auspices, there is danger lest we incur the charge of impiety,

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if we neglect them altogether, or of superstition, if we pay too sedulous an attention to them. If Becker were to detect a hundred other historical frauds, or adduce a hundred other arguments in support of his hypothesis, he would never persuade me that every thing was false, or that no reliance was to be placed on any historical evidence.

But, to return from this digression: I was placed, shortly after my arrival at Bergen, under the guardianship of my uncle Peter Lemmius, in whose house I remained until the great fire occurred in that town in the year 1702, when I was sent from the grammar-school of Bergen to the university of Copenhagen. This Peter Lemmius was an exceedingly facetious person; and the following incident will show that he was also a good-natured man. I had revenged myself for some injury I had received from one of his wife's relations, by writing a satirical poem, and this production had given so much offence to my aunt, that she insisted on my being punished for it. Peter Lemmius so far obeyed his wife's instructions, as to summon me before him with a severe air and threatening gestures; but, after a long prologue, when he came to the examination of the poem in question, all he did was to find fault with my prosody, and to object to the metrical accuracy of my iambics. I defended myself; a grammatical dispute arose, which after some time was amicably adjusted, my uncle desiring me, when I made another copy of verses, to pay more attention to my prosody.

I was sent to the university before the expiration of the time required to be spent in scholastic studies, partly because the school at Bergen was reduced to ashes, and partly because the master of the school, the celebrated Severinus Lintrupius, considered me not much inferior, in point of scho-

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larship, to those who were of an age to be dismissed. My pecuniary circumstances did not permit me to stay long at Copenhagen; accordingly, when I had passed my examination, I returned to Norway, and shortly after became tutor to the children of a professor of theology in the country. The professor stipulated that, whenever he should be prevented by illness, or any other cause, from discharging his theological functions, I should take his place, and expound the doctrines of the Christian religion to the rustics. I passed a year in flogging my pupils, and converting Norwegian boors; but I had better success as a preacher than as a pedagogue, for I was dismissed without much ceremony for too rigorous an exercise of the birch on the professor's youngest son, who was an impenetrable dunce, and his mother's darling; but I received, on my departure, the most flattering testimonies of approbation from the rustics, who did not hesitate to compare me to the late preacher, Peter, whose eloquence was in that country considered equal to that of Chrysostom. I did not regret my dismissal, for the task of teaching is especially irksome to a man of irritable temper, and my irritability was at that time increased by the complaint commonly called the night-mare, which visited me every night, and conveyed to me the sensation of being pressed down to the bed by some immense external body. The ancients supposed that Fauns or Satyrs were the beings who had a taste for riding upon us in our sleep; modern credulity has ascribed the propensity to matrons or virgins. I despaired of getting rid of this complaint, until I left the place in which I seemed to be selected by the presiding devil of the professor's establishment as the special object of his nocturnal visitations. I had neglected none of the usual remedies; I had placed my shoes before the bed with the heels uppermost, I had

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concealed a bit of iron under my pillow, and I had sung the mystical verses recommended in this peculiar case by Peter Paarsius; but all was of no avail. My tormentor seemed to be a provincial devil, who delighted in taking a nightly ride on the schoolmaster of the place; and as I felt indignant that a youth born of respectable parents should be used for so degrading a purpose, especially as I had through life spent my nights in a modest and solitary manner, and had never done any thing to merit such treatment from the fair sex, I gladly left the professor's house, in the hope that this nightly nuisance would cease with a change of situation.

I proceeded again to Copenhagen, in order to pass a final examination; and during my residence in the university I received some instruction in the French and Italian languages, not neglecting, however, my sacred studies, in which I made such proficiency, that at the end of the winter I obtained a high theological degree, and returned home with a good character, but an empty purse. Under these circumstances I was once more compelled to submit to the yoke which I had lately shaken off; and as Nicholas Schmidt, the vice-bishop of Bergen, wanted at that time a tutor for his children, I accepted the office, and discharged it for some months, when I began to feel like a man condemned to the mines. This Nicholas Schmidt had in his younger days travelled over most of the countries of Europe. He had kept a journal of his travels, which I was in the habit of reading in my leisure hours; and the perusal of this journal excited in me an ardent desire to visit foreign countries. My poverty appeared to present an insurmountable obstacle to the gratification of this wish; but difficulties only increased my desire of accomplishing my object, and I accordingly requested and obtained leave to retire from my situation, much against the incli-

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nation of my friends and of the vice-bishop, who perceived that his children were making rapid progress under my tuition.

Having once more become my own master, I proceeded to turn every thing I could collect into money. All my goods, chattels, and hereditaments, all my convertible property, in short, of what description soever, was sold, ceded, and alienated without remorse; like the alchymists, I endeavoured to make gold from every thing. After all these efforts, when I came to reckon my treasure, I found that my whole fortune amounted only to sixty imperials. Firm to my purpose, however, I embarked for Holland, relying not so much on my stock of money, which, to say the truth, was slender, as on my literary accomplishments, on which I set a far higher value; and I felt confident that, whenever my capital was exhausted, I should be able to support myself by teaching the French and Italian languages. Besides, whatever I had once resolved to execute, was with me fixed and irrevocable as fate.

When we came in sight of the isle of Flie, we were met by a piratical cruiser, which, however, did us no injury, but, on the contrary, gave rise to an incident which afforded us considerable amusement. The cook, fearing lest his money should fall into the hands of the pirate, wrapped up his treasure, consisting of a few pieces of small coin, in a dirty towel, and threw it into a pot of boiled peas, where the rust of the copper soon entered into intimate combination with the particles of pulse and butter. When the pirate had left us, and all fears had subsided, the cook took out his money purified from the rust it had contracted during some months, and placed the miscellaneous mixture to which the rust was imparted before us at dinner. After every one had partaken of this dirty repast, the cook men-

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tioned the stratagem he had employed to deceive the pirate, as if he had performed a meritorious exploit. Upon this a storm of indignation, mingled with laughter, disgust, and nausea, arose; a council was held, and the cook was at first sentenced to summary punishment; but he was subsequently pardoned, in consideration of the novelty and ingenuity of the expedient to which he had had recourse.

We proceeded gaily on our voyage until we arrived at our destination. I spent a pleasant fortnight at Amsterdam, taking care to see every thing in that city that was most worthy of the curiosity of a stranger; when, upon seriously calculating the extent of my resources, I discovered that my stock of money would be soon exhausted; and as the means of supplying it were not very obvious, I began to be alarmed at my situation, and to repent of the enterprise in which I had embarked. When I reflected on the character of the Hollanders, I despaired of deriving any assistance from my literary acquisitions, especially at Amsterdam, where trade occupies every man's thoughts, and philosophy is at a discount, and where even Grotiuses and Salmasiuses must give place to shipowners and merchants. Wherever I was introduced in consequence of the recommendatory letters I brought with me from Bergen, I received none of those attentions to which I considered myself entitled as a candidate for an honourable profession; on the contrary, I was compelled to listen in silence to the moral precepts and admonitions of men whose abilities and advice I held in utter contempt; for, though a mere stripling, I deemed myself an accomplished scholar, and a perfect man of the world, and I felt satisfied of my competency to teach my instructors. In short, I stood like Hercules between two turnings, reflecting on the road

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he should take. On the one hand, I had to encounter the shame of returning to my country, and, on the other, the impossibility of remaining long in Holland; since, with the utmost frugality I could employ, my stock of money would scarcely suffice for the expenses of six months. I was alarmed also by the state of my health, for I laboured under a continued fever, which reduced me to a deplorable state of weakness and emaciation, and added in no slight degree to my mental anxiety.

In this situation I was upon the point of determining to return to Norway, when my physician, Ivar Brederock, recommended me to try the baths of Aix la Chapelle, which were highly esteemed in cases of chronic disease. I readily caught at a proposition which could not fail to be attractive to a mind eager in the pursuit of novelty, and I rather followed the bent of my own inclination than my physician's advice, in undertaking a journey to Germany. I flattered myself that the very rashness of the enterprise would in some way or other ensure its success; but, contrary to my expectations, the journey cost me so large a sum that I despaired of being able to effect my return, especially as I was obliged to incur a considerable expense for the king's passport at Roermond; so that when I arrived at Aix la Chapelle I had only six imperials in my purse, with the useless testimonial, which I could not read without indignation; for the document, which seemed to me rather a satire than a testimonial, was couched in these terms—*Laissez passer et repasser le garçon Louis d'Holberg d'Amsterdam.*

My extremely youthful appearance had exposed me to derision on more than one occasion, for I overheard some of my fellow travellers observe, that I ought to be examined, and made to explain how it happened that I had left Norway alone, at

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an age when boys who cannot swim without corks, as the proverb has it, seldom venture to travel beyond the limits of their native country. The task of making this inquiry was, in fact, delegated to a certain priest, who, after he had desired me to approach with a magisterial air, proceeded to interrogate me after this fashion, *Hoer gy wel mancke?* when did you run away from school? My indignation was roused by this insult; and before the priest could add another word to his intended harangue, I poured forth a volley of Latin phrases which completely astonished and confounded my defenceless adversary, who, finding it expedient to abandon his dictatorial tone, exclaimed with respectful humility, *Die Heer ist en theologant! Ick gratulere, myn heer.*

Two years after this occurrence, when I was in England, and happened to be smoking my pipe in a coffee-house, a citizen of London, who entered the same box in which I was sitting, burst into a fit of laughter, exclaiming, "So the boy must smoke tobacco forsooth!" In France a similar mistake was made with respect to my age, even when I had attained the rank of a professor extraordinary; for a Parisian, having been asked by my landlord how old he took me to be, replied, *C'est un garçon de dix-huit ans.*

I lived three weeks at Aix la Chapelle with such frugality, that an anchorite need not have objected to my expenditure. At the expiration of this time, my necessities induced me to attempt the commission of an offence which neither before nor since ever entered my mind; that of sneaking off without paying my bill. Having packed up my clothes in my portmanteau, I rose at daybreak, and crept out at a back-door; but I was a very inexperienced cheat; and my host, who suspected my intentions, was on the watch for me, seized me at

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the threshold, and compelled me to satisfy his demands. This scene made a deep impression upon me; for a long time the image of my host was perpetually before my eyes; even in my dreams I saw him fastening upon my throat, and dragging me back with reproaches, which I had but too well merited, to the inn.

The payment of my bill having left me moneyless, I was compelled to return to Holland on foot. I was nevertheless in better spirits than usual; and whether constant bodily exercise or the baths had contributed to improve my health, I know not, but my strength was evidently much increased. That the mind depends for its support on the body, is a fact which I at that time fully experienced. My stock of money was exhausted, and I had no hope of obtaining a fresh supply; yet amidst these embarrassments I enjoyed perfect tranquillity of mind. I traversed every street in the city; I left no artifice or persuasion unemployed; I offered treble interest to bankers and money-changers; and I at length succeeded in obtaining from one of these accommodating persons a sufficient sum to pay my expenses to Norway. I was for some time in doubt whether I should return to Bergen or to some other part of Norway. At Bergen I had relations who could relieve my necessities; but I could not avoid reflecting on the ridiculous figure I should make there after my foolish expedition; for I was fully aware that what the poet says of poverty is nowhere so applicable as in the pauper's own country:

> Nil habit infelix paupertas durius in se
> Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.

On the other hand, I had no relations or censors to fear in other parts of Norway; accordingly, having seriously taken all these circumstances into consideration, I set out for Christiansand. Shortly after my arrival at this place, I formed an acquaint-

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ance with a student of Drontheim, named Christian Brixius, by whom I was recommended to several of the principal inhabitants, whose children I instructed in the French and other foreign languages.

I happened to have read at that time an anonymous pamphlet, in which the author endeavoured to prove by sixty arguments that women are not human beings. As I was delighted with every thing which had the air of novelty, this absurdity of course met my approbation; and as I had got all the arguments by heart, I took every opportunity of broaching the paradox, and of defending it with an earnestness proportioned to the zeal or indignation with which it was opposed. The sons of the late bishop of Christiansand attacked this doctrine with great vehemence, and they had reason to feel a more than ordinary interest in the argument, for they had a sister of great personal attractions, who was in their opinion eminently entitled to the rank and privileges of a human being. I soon began to perceive that the part I took in these discussions exposed me to considerable inconvenience; for certain sinister reports affecting my character were circulated about the town, and the women pointed at me in the streets as the monster who was endeavouring to close the gates of Paradise against them. I found it was high time to renounce my heresies; and to prove the sincerity of my recantation, I have since that time been on all occasions an encomiast of the fair sex. I soon succeeded in removing the unfavourable impressions which my fondness for disputation had excited against me; and, as I was a skilful musician, I had no difficulty in getting acquainted with the most elegant and accomplished women in Christiansand; and there is no part of Norway where a greater number of elegant and accomplished women are to be found.

I had spent some weeks in this manner, when I received an invitation from a clergyman who was

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distantly related to me, in whose house I remained during the whole winter; and, to make some return for my relative's hospitality, I taught him in that time the elements of the English language. A superficial knowledge of three or four languages had obtained for me a great reputation among the inhabitants of Christiansand; and I well remember, when I was sauntering one day through the town, being followed by two young men, one of whom observed to the other, "That is the great scholar who knows so many languages, and speaks French, Italian, Polish, Russian, and Turkish." I was as distinguished a person in Christiansand, as Mithridates king of Pontus was in Asia; and every body knows that historians record of that monarch, that he could speak twenty-two languages.

The number of my scholars increased daily, and among them were some persons of the highest distinction. I had, for instance, the commandant Nostitzius, who afterwards entered the Russian service, and became one of the first generals of his age. This success not only enabled me to pay all the debts I had contracted, but, upon balancing my accounts at the end of the winter, I found that I had a surplus of about twelve imperials. My plans however were somewhat disconcerted by the arrival of a Dutch merchant, who, having become a bankrupt in his own country, had fled to Christiansand, where he taught the French language, of which I had before the monopoly, for a very trifling remuneration. Having ascertained that my rival spoke French with a most barbarous accent, I was extremely desirous of proving my own superiority, and I accordingly challenged him to a public disputation in that language. Time and place were appointed; the scholars of both schools assembled; we met, we engaged; but it was a drawn battle. I assailed my rival with Norwegian French; he retorted in Dutch French, and

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never, I believe, was the French language more villainously distorted than it was on this occasion, both by its Dutch and Norwegian assassins. We both spoke with great difficulty, even when left to ourselves and in the calm possession of our faculties; but our mutual fury added so much to our embarrassment, that the number of solecisms we committed was surprisingly increased. Having exposed our ignorance to each other in this contest, we had the discretion to come to a friendly understanding, instead of continuing hostilities which would have been equally ruinous to both of us; and we accordingly, like Cæsar and Pompey, agreed to divide the territory of Christiansand between us. My claims to a monopoly were abandoned, and a duumvirate was established. On my side I observed faithfully the articles of this peace; indeed, I intended shortly to leave the Dutchman in exclusive possession of the field, for I had determined to make a voyage to England in the spring. In this expedition my friend Christian Brixius had agreed to accompany me; he was not much better able than myself to support the expenses of travelling, but he had a rich mother at Drontheim, who could assist him in case of any emergency.

We embarked on board a vessel which lay off Herenthals, and after a voyage of four days arrived at Gravesend, a town situated at the mouth of the river Thames. Being tired of sailing, we left our baggage on board the vessel, and proceeded on foot to London. At Gravesend an English citizen, who happened to be making a visit at that place, put some questions to me about the climate and situation of Norway, which he supposed to be a city of Sweden. I have frequently remarked similar instances of ignorance with respect to every thing connected with northern nations in England, in France, and in Italy. At Paris I heard a priest

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maintain resolutely that in the north of Europe the people were never baptized. An advocate in the supreme court at Paris asked, whether the road to Denmark lay through the Turkish empire? and another, whether persons who wished to sail to Norway were obliged to embark in the port of Marseilles? At Rome a young Piedmontese would not believe that I was a Norwegian, because he had learnt from an historical itinerary, which he had at Rome, that the Norwegians were a deformed race of people, having pigs' eyes, and mouths which reached to the extremities of their ears. The people of the south of Europe, attending only to domestic concerns, pay little regard to those of foreign nations; we, on the other hand, neglect our own countries, and are extremely desirous of travelling and acquiring information abroad. The people of the south cultivate their own, but neglect foreign languages; we neglect our native idioms, and are anxious to attain a proficiency in the languages of foreign nations. Englishmen, who are fond of travelling, seldom cross the seas until they have seen all that is calculated to gratify curiosity in their own country; we, on the contrary, generally visit foreign countries before we know any thing of our own.

But, to return to my narrative: on leaving Gravesend, we proceeded on foot to London. I acted as interpreter for my companion, who was ignorant of the English language, and could only attempt to make himself intelligible by signs. We stayed a short time at London, and then proceeded to Oxford, where, although our finances were at a low ebb, we spent some crowns in obtaining liberty of access to the library; for without this ceremony no one can enjoy the advantages of the public libraries at Oxford. But though we had entered our names among the votaries of learning in this university, our first care was not so much to avail ourselves of the privilege

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of examining and collating manuscripts, as to supply our domestic necessities, and to provide for the day that was passing over us. My companion professed music, and I professed grammar; but as we were no great proficients in the sciences we professed, we could not turn our acquisitions to much account in a place where it was to be expected that sound, not superficial, knowledge could alone ensure the success of a teacher. We lived three months at Oxford with so rigid an attention to economy, that we eat meat only once in four days; on the other three days we were obliged to be contented with bread and cheese, or even a more scanty and unsubstantial repast. My health and strength, to which a frugal mode of living has always been favourable, continued unimpaired; but my companion, who had not been accustomed to such meagre diet, lost his strength and flesh rapidly. Whenever the cravings of his stomach reminded him of his misfortunes, he cursed our ill-advised journey, and above all deplored the loss of the money which we had so improvidently thrown away for the sake of obtaining access to the library. At length he became melancholy, and wished to avoid altogether the society of mankind. I endeavoured to rally his spirits, by quoting among other things the facetious observation of Bion, that it is absurd to tear our hair when we are in affliction, as if baldness were a remedy for sorrow. But I was addressing a man whom grief had rendered insensible, and on whom neither exhortation nor raillery could make the slightest impression.

Our affairs had now reached a crisis at which it was necessary that some decisive step should be taken; and we determined to leave our baggage at Oxford, and return on foot to London. Here my companion obtained a supply of money from a banker, on the security of a citizen of Drontheim, who was acquainted with his mother; and being once

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more enabled to gratify his appetite, he pampered it with all sorts of delicacies, and endeavoured in this way to indemnify his stomach for the severe privations it had undergone. He recovered his flesh so rapidly, that though he left Oxford in a state of extreme emaciation, he returned after the lapse of a month with a paunch and complexion worthy of the best fed and ruddiest votaries of science in that university. He had abjured a life of solitude with the coarse fare which gave him a taste for it; and on our return to Oxford we indulged freely in the pleasures of a tavern which was much frequented by the students, with many of whom we soon became acquainted. There was a Scotchman, however, who, though he had formerly cultivated our society, received us coldly from the time we began to frequent the tavern. We were ignorant of the cause of this alteration in his conduct, until he told us, that he considered it highly indecorous in students to frequent taverns, and that at any rate it was very unusual to indulge in such excesses at Oxford. It is undoubtedly true, that there is scarcely any institution for public instruction in which the authorities are more respected, and in which the conduct of the students is more uniformly correct and decorous, than the university of Oxford. Here the most trivial offences are noticed and corrected; and the benefit which the students derive from this salutary discipline, is as striking as is the mischief which results from an opposite system in some other seats of learning, which are at the same time schools for drinking, feasting, gaming, and every species of debauchery. If you go out after ten o'clock at Oxford, it is difficult to imagine that you are in the midst of a populous city, so complete is the solitude, so profound the silence which reigns around you. In the evening, censors chosen annually, called proctors, visit all parts of the city; and if any students

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are discovered in taverns, or other improper haunts, they are subject to heavy fines and impositions. It is ridiculous enough, however, that these moral regulations do not extend to those who are distinguished by the higher academical degrees; for doctors and masters of arts enjoy the right of drinking in taverns till daybreak, and the attainment of the superior degrees confers the twofold privilege of disputing and of carousing in public. Hence the votaries of Bacchus have a strong motive for aspiring to honours to which such advantages are annexed; and there can be little doubt, that if the same encouragement were held out to students in other universities, the cause of philosophy would be greatly advanced. It is said, indeed, that this ingenious distinction is founded upon the supposition, that men who are distinguished by academical honours would spontaneously abstain from vices which others can only be deterred from committing by the fear of punishment. Certain it is, however, that most of the carousals and drinking-bouts in taverns take place under the auspices of masters of arts. I remember the students were often caught in our tavern; but whenever a superior graduate was present, they boldly told the proctors that they were in the company of masters of arts; upon which the censors immediately retired. If this little work admitted of such details, I could enter into many amusing particulars respecting this university; but I design only to present my readers with a short, simple narrative of my life, and to that object I shall endeavour to confine myself.

We passed about a month at Oxford in a gentlemanlike and jovial style, when my companion received a letter from his mother, desiring him to return to London, in order to place himself under the care of Mr George Ursin, the minister of the

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Danish church. He was afraid of incurring his mother's displeasure, if he disobeyed her instructions; and accordingly he took leave of me, and set out immediately for the metropolis. To me his departure was, for a time, a fresh source of anxiety and embarrassment, but I soon found consolation in the intimacy I had formed with the students of the university. Many of these took every opportunity of eulogizing my learning and good qualities; my knowledge of foreign languages and my skill in music became the subject of general admiration; and the fame which I acquired through the good offices of the friends I had made at the tavern, induced many students to quit their tutors, and to receive instruction from me, as the most celebrated grammarian and musician of the age. It would have been hard to determine, whether I was better furnished with grammatical or musical knowledge. My mediocrity in both was discovered by some of my more sagacious scholars, but they were good-natured enough to conceal it. The levity and fickleness of many of the students, who, after obtaining a little elementary knowledge, quitted me at the end of the first month, were also of wonderful assistance to me; for the seasonable retirement of my pupils enabled me to preserve my character for erudition, to say nothing of the advantage I derived from a laudable custom, which prevails here, of paying double tutorage for the first month, the additional remuneration being termed entrance-money. By dint of teaching, however, I improved myself so much, especially in music, that I was considered one of the most scientific flute-players in the whole city, and I was admitted into a society, which met every Wednesday at Oxford, called the Musical Club. No one was received into this club without a previous examination; the specimen

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which I gave of my musical abilities met with general approbation, and I afterwards became one of their most distinguished members.

I remained at Oxford, after the departure of Brixius, about fifteen months, during all which time I lived in a gay and sumptuous style; being invited almost every day by the fellows of colleges to dine and sup, or, as they say at Oxford, to take commons with them. For a long time I was known to the Oxonians by no other name than *Myn Heer*, that designation having, in the first instance, been given to me and my companion by our barber, who took us for Germans, and was desirous of showing that he was not altogether ignorant of our language, though he knew nothing beyond those two words. *Myn Heer* was so often repeated by the barber, that it was caught up by others; and as I did not care to correct the mistake, I should probably have been known at Oxford by no other appellation, if I had not accidentally met with a student of the name of Holberg, to whom I communicated the fact of our having the same name. As, in addition to this coincidence of names, his manners and pursuits agreed with mine, a friendship was soon formed between us, and I used sometimes to tell him playfully, that we probably came from the same stock, and were lineally descended from one of my ancestors who came over to Britain with Canute the Great.

I confess that I have many reasons for considering myself under great obligations to the Oxonians, and I cannot omit mentioning one among many other proofs of their kindness and liberality towards me. After sojourning nearly two years at Oxford, when I had determined to return to my native country, a fellow of Magdalen college called me aside, and begged me to declare candidly the state of my finances; adding, that he was sure the whole

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college would raise a liberal supply for me, if my scruples in point of delicacy could be overcome. My gratitude for this kind and liberal offer was unbounded; but as I was not destitute of the means of defraying my expenses, I magnanimously declined it; so that the reader has to divide his admiration between the generosity of the man who made the offer, and the sturdy independence of the man who refused it. The limits which I have prescribed to myself in this work will not permit me to expatiate on the various good offices which I received from the Oxonians. It cannot be denied, that the English frequently make an ostentatious display of their virtues, and that the pride peculiar to this nation sometimes assumes an offensive shape; but this fault is redeemed by many excellent qualities. I cringed to no man, though my experience of the character of this people convinced me that every thing was to be obtained from them by servility and obsequiousness; but servility and obsequiousness are foreign to my nature. The Oxonians respected me for my correct and moral deportment, and they were pleased with the sprightliness of my conversation; for this is a quality with which the English are wonderfully delighted, especially if it is seasoned with humour, in which they are themselves far from being deficient. They supposed me to be in priest's, or at any rate in deacon's orders; an error into which they were led by these words in my theological certificate, *modo nihil sacro ordine indignum designaverit.* I was frequently introduced, therefore, to fellows of colleges as a gentleman in holy orders; and my skill in theological disputation, and the dexterity with which I answered objections, or retorted upon my opponents, served to confirm this impression. The English are but moderately skilled in polemics, but they are well versed in sacred philology, in ecclesiastical law and history,

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and in the works of the Fathers. Some men study to obtain solid information, while others appear to have no other object than that of making an ostentatious display of their superficial acquirements. In other countries polemics and literary history are generally studied; and with the aid of abridgements and critical journals, the student is enabled in a short time to make a great parade of his learning; the English, on the contrary, proceed slowly, but investigate thoroughly; and hence they are really learned before they appear to be so.

I have always spoken Latin with difficulty and hesitation; such, at least, is my own opinion; but the English admired the readiness and fluency with which I expressed myself in that language. The truth is, that this exercise is so much neglected in England, that I met with no one, except Dr Smalridge, who could speak Latin tolerably; I do not except even Hudson, the librarian, who was nevertheless considered one of the first philologists of his day. The Oxonians, indeed, hold their public disputations in the Latin language, but after so miserable and bungling a fashion, that if they happen to see the face of a stranger, they become embarrassed, look foolish, perspire, and break off the thread of their argument, naturally enough supposing that the intruder comes not to hear, but to laugh at them.

I at length left Oxford, and returned to London, where I took care to see every thing that was shown for nothing. I went one day with a friend, whose name was Peter Holmes, to an Anabaptist chapel, and it so happened, that we entered the place of worship at the moment when an old woman was to be baptized. Holmes used always to take out with him a terrier bitch, that knew much better how to hunt a rat or a badger than to behave herself at the baptism of an old woman; in short, whatever

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the bitch saw in the water she was sure to pounce upon, and bring ashore, as her lawful prey. Accordingly, when the old woman was plunged into the water, the terrier, accustomed to obey the slightest nod or gesture, and excited by the noise of the immersion, ran forward, and would certainly have leaped into the water, and landed the Anabaptist, if Holmes had not dexterously caught her by the collar. This interference probably saved us from the more active vengeance of the Anabaptists; but we did not altogether escape with impunity, for we were thrust out of the chapel amidst the reproaches and vociferations of the congregation.

I embarked on board a Swedish vessel, and after a voyage of five days landed safely at Elsinore, from which place I proceeded on foot to Copenhagen. My health was at this time sufficiently good, except that I could never drink wine without suffering a great degree of feverish excitement from it; a circumstance which was not without its convenience to a man whose finances were at a low ebb. But I was often rallied on this account by my acquaintances, some of whom imagined that my abstinence proceeded from religious motives, while others attempted to persuade me, by dull, prosing dissertations, that wine was the best thing in the world for my constitution, and that the juice of the grape, salutary in all cases, was singularly suited to a spare habit of body. To all this I replied, that I must be better acquainted than any other man with my own constitution, and that to preserve my health, I knew from experience, it was necessary not only to abstain from luxuries, but to observe great moderation even in my ordinary diet. I have been all my life so perpetually engaged in disputes of this kind, that if I were to choose a subject for public disputation, it should be a discussion of the properties of wine or beer; for in selecting this

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topic, I should possess the same advantages as men who have changed their religion, and who are more conversant with the articles of faith they have abjured, in proportion as they are more exposed to the attacks of the sect from which they have deserted. To me, who hate the repetition even of a good thing, the continued infliction of such commonplaces as those I have alluded to is infinitely disgusting.

But to resume my narrative: though my health was good, my purse was nearly empty. I nevertheless thought it beneath the dignity of a gentleman, who had lived in a style of elegance and splendour, to get his living by the ordinary occupations of a schoolmaster; in a word, I was poor and proud. At length my affairs grew desperate, and I endeavoured to make a compromise between my pride and my necessities, by giving instruction in a form and under conditions suited to the dignity of my character. I called my school a college, my scholars an audience, my stool a professorial chair: I did not teach languages, but I lectured on the philosophy of foreign idioms; I did not specify the terms of instruction, but I put forth an elaborate prospectus in the Latin language, inviting the literary and philosophical public to attend the lectures delivered at my college. Attracted by these lofty professions, students came in crowds to my lecture-room; they attended my lectures with great regularity, listened to them with profound attention, and took notes with laudable diligence; but when the time of paying me for my labours arrived, they all disappeared. The only advantage I reaped from my exertions was, that whenever my scholars afterwards met me in the streets, they saluted me by taking off their hats in the most respectful manner; an indisputable proof of their

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gratitude, but an indifferent consolation for a starving professor.

My scheme of public instruction, however splendid and imposing, was too unfavourable to the tranquillity of my stomach to admit of my persevering in the experiment; and I once more condescended to accept employment as a schoolmaster, which supplied my necessities, if it did not satisfy my pride. I did not, however, remain long in this situation; for it happened that Paul Vindingius, formerly a counsellor of state, was about to send his son Andrew into Germany, and as he wanted a person to accompany the youth on his journey, I was selected for that purpose, although I was not personally known to the family.

We proceeded to Dresden, where I left young Vindingius at the house of the baron de Lovendal, and was civilly dismissed. Nothing remarkable occurred on this journey, except that Vindingius, when he was about to leave Brunswick at a very early hour in the morning, left behind him a portmanteau filled with clothes, which after the lapse of some weeks was delivered safe to him at Dresden. We sat up so many nights during this journey, that when we were allowed to take a little repose, there was the greatest possible difficulty in rousing us. Indeed my only surprise was, that we left so few things behind us, and that we had not forgotten our breeches as well as our baggage. Uninterrupted rest is not to be expected by those who travel in the ordinary hired vehicles in Germany; and I therefore recommend such travellers to drink coffee, a beverage which will keep the drowsiest subjects awake, unless they can sleep in defiance of continued shaking and bumping, like postilions whom we see jogging and snoring at the same time with a singular observance of time and intonation.

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On leaving Vindingius, I went to Leipsic, where I met one of my countrymen named Heischer, who is at this time professor at Altenau. He was a very pleasant and facetious young man, and he had no great difficulty therefore in persuading me to extend the period I had prescribed for my absence, for the sake of enjoying his company. During our stay at Leipsic we attended the college lectures, not so much to obtain instruction as to criticise the professors, at whose expense we constantly amused ourselves on our return. Stivelius was our favourite professor, for he furnished us with more abundant topics of ridicule than any of his colleagues. One of the doctrines on which this professor delighted to enlarge was, that the elect would have excellent dinners and suppers in Paradise. On one occasion I recollect hearing this man comment at considerable length, in what he supposed to be pure and elegant Latin, on the loss of his gloves, which had been filched from his person on the preceding day by one of his pupils. We saw every thing which was worthy of notice in this celebrated university, and we also visited most of the distinguished men who resided there. Among these were Cyprian, Rechenburg, Borner, and Mencken, to all of whom strangers had easy access. Indeed the courtesy which literary men show to foreigners throughout Germany, cannot be too much commended.

From Leipsic I went to Halle, where my stay, however, was so short, that the only professor I saw was the celebrated Thomas. My visit to this professor afforded me little satisfaction, for he talked only of the inclemency of the season, and other indifferent topics; not thinking it worth while, I suppose, to enter upon philosophical subjects with so young a man as myself.

When I returned to Brunswick, I heard that the portmanteau which had been left there was sent

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forward. There were also some other effects of less value, which I found safe and untouched at the inn; among them were my boots lined with bear-skin, which were a great comfort to me during the severe frost which set in shortly after my departure from Hamburgh. The cold was so intense, that although I was equipped with four coats and waist-coats, four pair of breeches, and leg-gear in proportion, it nevertheless penetrated to my flesh. The delicacy of my constitution rendered it necessary for me to protect myself with all these garments, though my outward appearance was so disfigured by them, that I looked more like a monster than a man. None of my fellow-travellers suffered more from the inclemency of the weather than a Swedish captain who, having recently left Paris, was effeminately tricked out in silken and satin finery, which he now wished cordially at the devil, and would gladly have exchanged for a coarse Russian cloak, or a shaggy lion's hide.

This captain, who was a singularly fastidious and querulous person, affected a great contempt for all his fellow-travellers except myself, to whom he behaved with marked attention and civility. I shrunk however from his advances; for I was disgusted with the ill temper, pride, and ostentation, which he had exhibited during the journey. He was not an uneducated man, and occasionally he made observations which showed him to be above the ordinary rank. He spoke several languages with fluency, he discovered an acquaintance with music, and possessed some general information, though he committed blunders and anachronisms which proved his historical knowledge to be very superficial and ill-digested. I remember one evening, when we were staying for a short time at an inn, and the virtues of the old Romans happened to be the subject of conversation, the captain, to show that he too

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could take a part in the discussion, adverted to the self-devotion of Marcus Curtius in the following manner: 'Quintus Curtius Rufus, who has favoured us with a history of the exploits of Alexander the Great, when a wide gap opened in the middle of the forum, and the oracle declared that it would not close until some one had thrown himself into it, did not hesitate to sacrifice himself for his country, but mounting his horse, and devoting himself to the gods Manes, he leaped into the gulf; an act of self-devotion,' continued the captain, 'which proves Quintus Curtius to have been as great a hero as the Macedonian whose life he has written.'

We found the lesser strait of the Baltic so completely frozen over, that we went safely on foot from Middefarth to Funen, but at the greater strait the ice was not sufficiently secure. We staid eight days at Neuburgh, expecting that the frost would either break, or increase so as to render the ice passable; but the delay became irksome, and we accordingly hired boats, in which we were drawn by sailors first to the isle of Sproa, and afterwards to Crucisora, which is a maritime town of Seeland. Here, although it is by no means a part of my design to relieve the dryness of this work by descriptions of the places I have visited, yet as Sproa has been hitherto unnoticed by geographers, I shall deviate a little from the course I have prescribed myself, by giving a short account of this island, that the reader may see whether it deserves its reputation; for the Danes, when they wish some disaster to befall their enemies, bid them go to the island of Sproa.

Sproa lies between Neuburgh and Crucisora. Of the fertility of the island I cannot speak with certainty, since, when I saw it, it was covered with ice and snow. The metropolis, which is situated exactly in the centre of the island, does not seem capable of containing more than one family; for, except an old woman and two virgins, I saw no

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human being on its surface. I have to regret the absence, at the time I visited the place, of the viceroy or father of the family, from whom I might possibly have learned the form of government and the nature of the institutions peculiar to this island. That I may fully discharge the duty of a geographer on this occasion, something should be said of the character of the people; and this, as might be expected from the remote situation of their country, and the little intercourse they enjoy with other nations, savours strongly of primeval simplicity; for I had no sooner made my bow to one of the virgins, who, by the way, was said to have the advantage of her sister in point of good breeding, than she exclaimed, Look at that dog —— against the wall!

What could be more expressive, than this observation, of that ancient frankness and simplicity which were supposed to characterise our northern nations? I began to persuade myself that I had at length discovered a people to whom all the vices, as well as the refinements, of polished life were unknown; but they soon convinced me that they were as far advanced in civilization as the French or the Italians themselves, by asking us two imperials for a single chamber. The Swedish captain, to whom this extortion appeared intolerable, attacked the old woman in a strain of eloquence which was meant to be irresistibly impressive, but which the old woman and the two virgins answered by a furious assault upon his person. The captain was no match for his warlike antagonists, and was at length forced to submit to their demands. I assume that the chastity of the younger females was intact, partly on account of their ferocity, which is held to be a proof of virtue, and partly because in that solitary situation they could scarcely find an opportunity of surrendering their virtue, even if they had the inclination to be frail. The only provisions we could obtain here were ducks, which were however both roasted and boiled

for us. There was but one bed at our disposal, and this was ceded to a young lady who accompanied us; the rest of the party slept upon straw, with the exception of a young Dutchman, the son of a merchant at Amsterdam, who preferred sleeping in the boat. The Dutchman awoke in the middle of the night, and finding his limbs stiff and aching from the effects of his hard lodging, crept softly into the young lady's bed, where, with the characteristic coldness of his nation, he slept till morning; when the lady, suddenly discovering her snoring companion, leaped out of bed with all the dismay which a vestal would naturally feel under such circumstances; the Dutchman making no attempt to detain her, but rather rejoicing in the additional space he gained by her departure. We left Sproa early in the morning, and proceeded to Crucisora. The Swedish captain nearly lost his life in this expedition; indeed it generally happens that morose people meet with misfortunes, as angry gamesters are sure to lose, and cowards seldom escape in the field of battle. The captain, who *would* walk on the ice at a distance from the boat, to convince us of his courage, fell of course into a hole. The sailors succeeded in extracting him with grappling-irons; but he was half-dead with cold, and obliged to exchange his silken apparel for coarse but dry garments. He was afterwards seized with a malignant fever at Copenhagen, but he recovered, and took his departure for Sweden.

I had scarcely returned from my third expedition, when the late privy-counsellor and arch-chamberlain, Frederick Gedde, offered to place his sons under my care and tuition. I hesitated for some time whether I should again undertake so troublesome an office; but necessity at length compelled me to accept a situation which, however irksome, seemed likely to open the way to future preferment. For the first six months I exercised my authority with

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sufficient vigour, but afterwards I grew weary of the labour of controlling my pupils; I became an indolent spectator of their quarrels, instead of interposing as I had formerly done; and when I beheld them tearing each other's hair in my presence, I contented myself with entreating them to desist. I had no reason to complain of the docility of my pupils, but they were exceedingly pugnacious. The youngest son made a rapid progress under my tuition, which I attributed however rather to his own diligence than to any exertions of mine. He was a youth of great promise, and might have been an ornament to his country, if his good qualities had had time to ripen; but he was killed in a duel by a Norwegian officer, whom he challenged in the Low Countries. The second son was drowned in crossing a river; the youngest and only surviving son is at this time captain of a troop of horse. I retired from this situation at the end of a year, having been admitted a member of the Medicean college.

During my residence in this college I published two works. The first was '*An Introduction to European History*,' after the plan of Puffendorf. This production appears, on a superficial examination, to be a mere translation; and, in fact, one of our Danish historians has not scrupled to assert that it is transcribed from the history of Puffendorf; a more attentive examination, however, will convince the reader that, with the exception of the section on Germany, it is derived from original sources. I commenced this work in England, when I had an opportunity of consulting the books from which the materials are taken in the Bodleian library, and when I was animated with the desire of becoming an author before I had acquired a beard. With this view I compiled a system of universal geography, subjoining an historical account of each nation to my geographical description; but as the geography

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of Phlugius, in quarto, appeared at the time when my work was nearly ready for publication, I abandoned my original design, and afterwards published the historical part of my book under the above-mentioned title of '*An Introduction to European History.*' I have since this time determined on several occasions to revise and improve the whole of this work, which, as I have stated, was begun at a very early period of my literary career; but other occupations have interposed, and prevented me from carrying these intentions into effect.

Not long after the publication of this work, I wrote an '*Appendix to the Universal History,*' giving an account of the present state of the principal kingdoms and governments of the world, in five volumes. The first volume only of this work was printed; the others still remain in manuscript. In fact, I was obliged at this time to abandon my inquiries into modern history, as it pleased our august sovereign to nominate me an extraordinary professor, and I immediately devoted myself to the study of ancient literature with a zeal proportioned to my gratitude for the honour which had been conferred upon me.

I was indebted for this mark of royal favour to a manuscript volume in folio, which I dedicated with all humility to his majesty; for I felt that, as I was but little known to the nobility, it was only from the countenance and patronage of my sovereign that I could hope for advancement.

Et spes, et ratio studiorum in Cæsare tantum.

Nor were my hopes disappointed; for I immediately partook of that bounty which never fails to encourage meritorious exertions. The manuscript volume contained an account of the reigns of Christian the Fourth and Frederick the Third. I had consulted the best authorities, and cited them in the margin; that portion of the work which was taken from the writers of the Universal History, viz. Aitzema and

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Victorius Sirus, and from the first volume of the Theatrum Europæum, which is better than the succeeding volumes, occupied only a few pages. I confess that there are many defects in this performance; in fact, I did not venture to call it a history, but merely '*An Introduction to the History of Denmark.*' It is to be comprised in two volumes; but the second volume, embracing the reign of Christian the Fifth, I have not yet completed.

Such were my labours during the five years I remained in the Medicean college; and yet, because I neglected the usual scholastic disputations and declamations, many considered me an indolent man; and I was for the same reason held to be wholly ignorant of the Latin language, although, with the exception of the inspector of the college, Nicholas Aagard, I was in reality the only member of the college who understood the language of ancient Rome. It was thought extremely absurd, that a man who had never attended to the ordinary exercises of the schools, should attempt to discharge the duties of a professor; and certainly, if I were disposed to subscribe to the opinions of my academical censors, I must admit the charge of ignorance, for I should undoubtedly be rejected at one of their philosophical examinations. If I could form a syllogism, my success would be quite accidental, for I should not know whether it was in Barbara or Elisabetha. I have heard of something they call instrumental philosophy, of which logic and metaphysics, the tutelary divinities of the schools, form the chief ingredients; but I have no personal acquaintance with it; and I candidly confess that I am at this day ignorant how many predicaments, or predicables, logic can bring into the field, when an argument is to be taken by storm, or an obnoxious disputant is to be ousted from the chair. I have often thought of applying myself to these studies,

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but I have never had leisure to do so; and I am free to admit, although I am aware that I expose myself to the ridicule of the schoolmen by the avowal of so much ignorance, that I know absolutely nothing of instrumental philosophy, unless music form a part of their philosophical scheme, in which case, indeed, I may lay claim to a moderate degree of skill in instrumental music. Be this as it may, I trust that, as I quarrel not with other men's literary taste, I may be permitted to enjoy my own. It may be a problem, for aught I care, whether a man ignorant of the scholastic philosophy ought to be a public professor; it is beyond all controversy, however, that I *am* a public professor, and that those who take a different estimate of literary qualifications from the schoolmen, who are occupied only with unmeaning jargon, have judged me capable of discharging the duties of the office.

But my new dignity was accompanied with new inconveniences; for it imposed upon me the necessity of living with a certain degree of elegance, while in my public capacity I could no longer avail myself of those resources which were open to me in the more humble situation of a private instructor. A short time before my promotion I had obtained, by the kindness of Ivar Rosencrantz, privy counsellor to the king, and patron of the Rosencrantzian Missionaries, a pension of 100 imperials for four years, subject to the liability of being sent abroad to the Protestant academies. I was one of the pensionaries selected for foreign service; and I was not sorry that this duty had devolved upon me; for as my narrow income compelled me to live with great economy, I thought I should be able to make it go farther abroad than in my own country.

I sailed immediately for Amsterdam, stopped a few days at Goude, and thence proceeded by land to Rotterdam, where I rested a whole day. In the

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boats drawn by horses in Holland it is difficult to sleep either by day or night; for amidst so many passengers there are generally some who are too riotous to permit other persons to enjoy repose. In the passage to Goude there was a young Swede on board, an admirable mimic, who would not suffer me to sleep for a moment; during the whole night he pretended to snore, or made horrible noises, as if oppressed by frightful dreams, which kept every body awake.

At Rotterdam I saw in the evening some school-boys amusing themselves by throwing stones at the statue of Erasmus; and this, I was told, was their accustomed pastime. I was not surprised at the audacity of the boys, but at the negligence of those whose duty it was to repress it; for I could not help feeling indignant at witnessing this profanation of a monument which ought to be an object of veneration, not only to the fellow-citizens of the illustrious scholar whose ashes it contains, but to the whole literary world.

From Rotterdam I proceeded to Antwerp, where I lodged with a citizen of Hamburgh, whom I had known at Amsterdam, and who had lived some years at Drontheim. There I embarked on board a vessel, which conveyed me at a very moderate expense to Brussels. There was no conveyance by water for the remainder of my journey, and I began to be alarmed at the expense I should probably incur; when it occurred to me that very respectable persons frequently travelled on foot, and that as we freely imitated the follies of the French, there was no reason why we should not also imitate their prudence; for Frenchmen, when they have no money to pay for a voiture, generally prefer travelling on foot. Yielding to these considerations, I sent forward my baggage by the public conveyance, and proceeded on foot to Paris. As this was a time of

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war, and I was not furnished with a passport, I was afraid of being detained at some of the garrisoned towns; but I was only once asked on my journey, as I was entering the mountains of Hainault, whither I was going, and whether I had a passport. I replied boldly, that I was proceeding to Paris, and that I had a royal passport in my pocket; upon which the sentinel, persuaded of the truth of my assertion, suffered me to pass on. I was annoyed, however, by the custom-house officers, who even examined my breeches pockets, to see whether I had tobacco or any other contraband commodity in them. In other respects, travellers are subject to less annoyance on this road than in Germany and other parts of the north of Europe, where they are obliged to remain outside the gates of a town until they obtain permission to pass from the magistrate or commandant, and where even at the inns they are compelled to register their names, country, occupation, and other particulars which the suspicion peculiar to northern nations exacts from them. I should have found it utterly impossible to travel without a passport through Germany, where you are asked ten times a day, by some surly grim-visaged sentinel whence you come, and whither you are going. When I was a member of the Medicean College, I remember meeting a lieutenant of the guards, not far from Elsinore, who, when I told him that I had walked five miles on foot, suspected me to be a Swedish spy; and notwithstanding my protestations of innocence, and the declaration of my name, country, and occupation, ordered one of his men to arrest me. I was conducted, like a prisoner of war, to an inn situated between Copenhagen and Elsinore, where I was examined, and at first condemned, but after some time acquitted, and civilly dismissed. The officer, who fancied that he had made an important capture, and expected to enter

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the city in triumph, did not even reap the honour of an ovation.

The French omit no opportunity of cheating travellers of their money. Those who are aware of this national propensity never enter an inn without making a previous bargain with the landlord; and the traveller who does not take this precaution is sure to be unmercifully pillaged. But this failing is compensated by a surprising suavity of demeanour, and by an elegance of manners peculiar to this people. Their gaiety and politeness made my journey delightful, though my feet were sore from continued exertion. You meet with greater extortion, and a greater degree of civility, as you approach the capital; and at Paris the dearness of provisions and the refinement of manners are at their highest elevation. For my own part, I was not in a condition to suffer much from their extortion; I travelled through fortified towns without a passport, through forests and solitudes without a companion; I had nothing to apprehend, for I could exclaim with the poet,

Cantabit vacuum coram latrone viator.

At length I arrived much fatigued at Paris, where I spent an hour wandering about the city, and attempting in vain to find out a lodging; for I pronounced the French word *logis* in a way that nobody could understand; and it was no small mortification to me, who imagined myself to be a perfect master of the French tongue, to overhear a French abigail say that '*I spoke French like a German horse.*' It was a bitter blow to the pride of an extraordinary professor, to be scoffed at by a French waiting-maid. That unlucky syllable *gi*, which we pronounce so unintelligibly, led me through all the suburbs of Paris, and placed me, as it were, under a ban. In the first place, the French, in speaking of a lodging,

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do not say *logis*, but *chambre garnie*; and in the next place, I pronounced *logis* like *Lucie*, so that I seemed rather to be seeking for a mistress than an apartment; and some of the persons to whom I addressed myself, smiled significantly, and replied, '*Je ne la connois point, Monsieur*'—'I am not acquainted with the lady, sir.' It is difficult for foreigners to imitate the French in their pronunciation of *g*, or *ch* before the vowels *i* and *e*.* I remember, some months after my arrival, when I wanted to purchase some historical works, a bookseller, upon my asking him for Du Chesne, handed me the works of Lucian; misled by my pronunciation, which approached nearly to that of the French word *Lucien*.

At length I procured a lodging in the Faubourg

* The Norwegians, Danes, Swedes, Germans, also the Italians, Spaniards, &c. have no sounds in their languages analogous to that alluded to in the text; in English we have a sound very nearly approaching to it in the final syllables of the words *elusion*, *contusion*, &c. It would be a curious problem to determine the causes of national aptitude or inaptitude in the pronunciation of foreign languages. To refer inaptitude to any specific *congenital* difference of organization in the inhabitants of particular countries, would be unscientific; for, as far as anatomy can throw any light upon the question, the organs of speech are in all countries the same. It is known, however, that muscles which are not exercised not only sustain loss of power, but undergo complete absorption; and in this way a considerable portion of the muscular structure of the larynx may, in a great proportion of cases, be destroyed; so that although men of all countries may be *born* with the same organs of speech, there will be infinite variety in the facility with which those organs adapt themselves to the enunciation of particular sounds, according as they have been more or less exercised at an early period of life. Facts seem to support this hypothesis. A Russian, whose language comprehends not only almost all the sounds which are to be found in the other dialects of Europe, but many which are peculiar to the Slavonic dialects, easily accommodates himself to the pronunciation of all the European languages. A Frenchman, on the contrary, who has comparatively very little exercise for the organs of speech in the enunciation of his own language, for his nose relieves these organs of half their labour, is at an adult age almost physically disqualified from speaking any foreign language. Yet if a French infant were taken to Russia, and were to receive a Russian education, is there any reason for supposing that he would not speak Russian, and, by consequence, any other European language, with the facility of a native of that country? —Tr.

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St Germain, where I spent some months in philosophical seclusion, communing only with my books, and with my own thoughts; for I knew no one but my landlord, and I was known to no one. I went every day to the public gardens, where I saw an immense concourse of people; but to me the gardens were wildernesses, and the men little better than statues; so that amidst all this social affluence I thirsted, like another Tantalus, for society. I visited diligently the Mazarine library and the library of St Victor, although the latter was at a great distance from my lodging. I was astonished to find the public libraries so little frequented in a city which abounds with literary men; for during the whole of the subsequent winter I saw no one in the library of St Victor, except a German student who came occasionally to consult some geographical charts. The Mazarine library was not so entirely deserted, for the college of Four Nations is situated in the centre of the Faubourg St Germain, and there is, besides, a greater number of new books to be obtained there. In the morning, before the doors of the library were opened, a number of students generally assembled, ready to rush in and seize the prize that awaited the first man who entered. That prize was Bayle's Dictionary, a book which was read with extraordinary avidity, and the temporary possession of which was the object of all the struggling and contention at the door, and of the race which took place after the students were admitted. The strongest and the swiftest of foot generally succeeded in obtaining the prize.

I lived, as I have stated, two or three months at Paris secluded from the society of men. I shrunk naturally from mean society, for I have always abhorred the vulgar portion of the species—*odi profanum vulgus et arceo;* and I was afraid of the

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expense I might incur by entering into more cultivated circles. I sometimes chatted familiarly with my host, who delighted to hear me talk of ancient history, while I listened with attentive complacency to his gossiping anecdotes. I detailed historical facts in a perplexed and barbarous dialect, while he narrated ridiculous stories in pure and not inelegant French. I remember his asking me on one occasion the name of the emperor who destroyed Jerusalem, upon which I answered Titus. He proceeded to inquire whether Titus was a Roman or a Grecian emperor; when a member of parliament,* who happened to be present, saved me the trouble of answering this question, by informing my host that it was a Roman emperor, and that his name was, strictly speaking, Titus Livius. This answer, coming from an advocate of some celebrity, certainly deserved a place among the *responsa prudentum* of the civilians. I used frequently to attend the Palace of Justice, to observe the manner in which the French civil law was administered. I admired the eloquence of the advocates; their enunciation was noble, the arrangement of their discourses was apt, their figures diversified; and such was their power in moving the passions of their hearers, that you might have fancied Cicero or Demosthenes to be addressing an audience in the French language. Nothing, however, could be more slovenly and indecorous than the manner in which the judges gave their suffrages in the cases before them. They would rise suddenly from their seats before the pleadings were concluded, and, forming a circle in the middle of the court-house, whisper something in the ear of the president, who proceeded to deliver his judg-

* The English reader, especially if he has had any parliamentary experience, will naturally imagine that this scene must have taken place in London, and not at Paris; it may be right to mention, therefore, that the respondent was an advocate in the French parliament.—Tr.

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ment. While the judges were in the act of deliberating, the disputes of the advocates continued without intermission, and the utmost disorder and confusion reigned on all sides. Even while the advocates were pleading, the noise made by the auditors, if auditors they could be called, was so great, that it seemed to be rather a market-place than a court of justice; and though the officers of the court were perpetually enjoining silence, their authority contributed but little towards the restoration of that decency and order which should regulate judicial proceedings.

I was not satisfied with seeing all that was worthy of curiosity in Paris, but I visited many of the cities in its vicinity, especially Versailles, which surpassed my expectations, notwithstanding all I had heard and read of it. I at length grew weary of solitude, and went to see a Swedish priest who lived at no great distance from my lodgings, from whom I learned that there were three Danes in Paris, a physician, a priest, and a tailor; the two former of whom were of such opposite habits and manners, that although they came from the same town, the tailor could by no possibility (if I may be pardoned the expression) stitch up an acquaintance between them. I had afterwards many opportunities of observing the different characters of these men. The physician was so scrupulous an observer of all the injunctions of the Romish church, that he would have preferred injuring his health to violating the canon which prohibits Catholics from eating flesh during Lent. The priest, who had embraced the tenets of the Romish church with a view to its emoluments, observed religiously all those papal ordinances which tended to promote the temporal comfort of the clergy, and concerned himself little with any other rites or ceremonies. The physician was consistent in his general conduct, and remarkably tenacious of the faith

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he had embraced; the priest, like the Tigellius of Horace, was always fluctuating between extremes. In his domestic arrangements he was either extravagant or mean; in his dress he was either effeminately spruce, or disgustingly dirty. At one time he would affirm, that there was no salvation out of the pale of the Romish church; at another he would admit the truth of the doctrines of the reformed church; one day he would boast of his wealth, and the next day he would swear that he had not a farthing in the world. The physician was silent, of unimpeachable veracity, and attached to literary pursuits; the priest delighted in chattering, was a confirmed liar, and avowed his contempt for literature. Notwithstanding his ignorance, he had contrived to get himself appointed to the superintendence of a library which in point of extent is equal to that of Vienna or Florence. The librarian however had no desire of emulating the fame of the Lambecks or Magliabechis. I remember on one occasion, when I wanted the Antiquities of Josephus, he told me that he had never heard of such a work, and that I had probably confounded Josephus with Philo; on another occasion, when I inquired what was the number of volumes in the library, he replied, that none but poor shepherds counted their flocks. Our librarian was born in Funen, and educated at the Ottonian school, whence he was sent to the university of Copenhagen. He obtained a degree at the university, and some years after went to France, where he abjured the Protestant faith, and so insinuated himself into the favour of the abbé de Bignon, that that prelate intrusted him with the charge of his library. He was afterwards dismissed from his situation on account of some misconduct, and became reduced to a state of extreme poverty and wretchedness.

I was amused with this man's ridiculous and

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ostentatious paradoxes. Whenever mention was made of his countrymen, he used to boast, that if he could only obtain permission to preach and openly discuss religious questions in Denmark, he would convert the whole kingdom. He once provoked my indignation, when he impudently asserted that the Lutherans scarcely deserved the name of Christians, and that no trace of Christianity remained in their religion, with the exception of the sacrament of baptism. A dispute arose between us, and I had no difficulty in triumphing over an ignorant and defenceless adversary; but, just as he was upon the point of acknowledging his defeat, a doctor of the Sorbonne entered the room; and the librarian, glad to escape from the field, engaged me in a contest with this new antagonist. A fierce but fruitless discussion ensued: being tolerably conversant with ecclesiastical history, I endeavoured to destroy the doctor with his own weapons; but after an hour's argumentation, we separated in the usual manner, that is to say, each of us retained his original opinions, and each persuaded himself that he had obtained a victory over the other. When the contest was over, Borman, for that was the Swede's name, whispered in my ear that I had fought manfully, and when the doctor had left us, he confessed that the doctrines of Luther bore the stamp of divine authority; but soon after, with his characteristic levity, he relapsed into his old strain, and chanted the praise of popery.

His patron, the abbé de Bignon, was one of the most celebrated prelates of the age, and was not less distinguished as an ecclesiastic than as a man of letters and a politician. He had a splendid establishment, maintaining no less than four secretaries, a librarian, four musicians, and a female vocalist. I have twice heard him speak in the Academy of Sciences; his eloquence was unrivalled; and whenever

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he preached at the church of St Germain of Auxerre, the crowds which flocked from all parts to hear him were so great, that it was an object of contention to gain admission into the church.

My other countryman, the physician, was also a native of Funen. He had abjured the religion of his ancestors, but he had not lost his affection for the place of his birth, for he delighted in any opportunity of showing kindness to his countrymen. He received me with great cordiality, and I was enabled, through his civility and knowledge of the town, to see many things which deserve the notice of a stranger. He was a modest, frank, obliging, warm-hearted young man, but too much given to theological disputation. He was so fond of this exercise that he not only took every opportunity of engaging in it himself, but he introduced me to some of his acquaintances who were equally pugnacious; so that a great part of my time was consumed in religious controversies. I did not at that time know how to deal with disputants of this description; for I had not learned the logic of the celebrated Nicolas Grisius, who, when he was challenged by a certain abbé, replied, that disputation was needless, for there could be no subject of contention between men of the same opinions. The abbé immediately inquired what was the established confession of faith in Denmark? Why, the Danes, said Grisius, believe that when the pope maintains with so much zeal the sanctity and authority of the Romish church, he takes the best means of supplying his own treasury, and in this opinion even the consistorial college agrees with the Danes. Grisius had the laugh on his side, and the abbé was silenced.

My countryman, Winsoff, was much esteemed in France, not only for his pleasing manners, and the general propriety of his conduct, but for his medical knowledge, and especially his skill in the science of

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anatomy. He could scarcely have left his own country from any views of pecuniary advantage; for he would have gained more money in Denmark, where there are fewer medical practitioners, and he had moreover married at Paris a woman who had neither fortune nor family to recommend her. He united with considerable erudition a great degree of simplicity, and he was of a temperament that was easily led astray by the blandishments of the sirens of Paris. He used to attribute his conversion to the disputations held on Sundays and festivals in the church of St Sulpice, where a priest, who has a salary from the crown for that purpose, defended the doctrines of the Roman Catholic church against all opponents. I frequently attended these disputations; and I perceived that men of weak understanding might be easily ensnared by them, for the priest was a subtle disputant, and moreover knew how to attack his opponents in a vein of ridicule which convulsed his hearers with laughter, so that the whole scene was rather of a theatrical than a religious character. Besides, the opponents were for the most part either illiterate persons, who could make no stand against the priests, or Papists themselves, who merely made a show of opposition; and what can be easier than to overcome an antagonist who is himself willing to be vanquished? One of his regular opponents, who was always ready to undertake the office in the absence of others, was a cobbler, whom the priest well knew how to circumvent and reduce to an absurdity. There are few cobblers in our country who venture beyond their lasts; but this was a cobbler of no small erudition; he could not only quote texts of scripture, but cite passages in the Fathers, and appeal to ecclesiastical history in aid of his arguments. At first I refused to believe that he was a cobbler, nor did I relinquish my incredulity until I was taken

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to his shop, where I saw my friend in the act of mending old shoes. We have, doubtless, many cobblers in Norway who could compete with this fellow in repairing shoes, but we may look in vain among them for his equal in learning. Most of the priest's opponents were men of the same level; accordingly on almost all occasions he ascended the pulpit secure of victory.

There came to Paris about this time a Danish student, who, being tolerably well skilled in polemics, determined to engage the priest; but as the disputations were conducted only in the French language, of which the student knew nothing, I was despatched as a herald to declare war in form, and to inquire whether it would be permitted to dispute in Latin. The priest consented, and appointed a day for the contest. They engaged in different parts of the town with various success. In the first contest, which was held in the church, the Dane was victorious, and the priest descended crest-fallen from the pulpit; challenging the student however to a fresh conflict on the same day in a different quarter of the city. With the change of situation the student's fortune also changed; for the priest, who had been accustomed only to ludicrous contests, finding that he had now an antagonist whom it was necessary to treat seriously, came better prepared for the second conflict. The Dane was not so well skilled in ecclesiastical history as in polemics; and the priest, perceiving where he should gain an advantage, led him into the labyrinth of sacred history, with which he was much better acquainted than his opponent. They had afterwards many other skirmishes and regular battles, one of which, I remember, was fatal to the priest; for a question arising about a certain particle, which is translated *for* in the Vulgate, whereas it ought to be *and*, the Dane appealed to the original Hebrew,

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of which the priest knew nothing. He endeavoured at first to conceal his ignorance, and with jesuitical cunning to divert the argument into a different channel; but the Dane perceived the subterfuge, pressed home his *and*, and brought him back to Jerusalem without mercy. The priest was on this occasion overwhelmed with confusion, and glad to seek another opponent. But in their last engagement, upon the question, "*Who rightly interpret the scriptures?*" the student was defeated, and the priest descended from the pulpit amidst the congratulations of the Parisians. Had the Dane been better read in ecclesiastical history, he might easily have confuted his adversary, by showing that the decrees of councils are in many instances diametrically opposed to each other, and that in the Romish church, therefore, the interpretation of the scriptures rests upon a most precarious foundation. But our Danish youth, while they cultivate polemics with ardour, are too apt to neglect the study of sacred history. This neglect not unfrequently opens a door to apostasy, for the argument commonly urged by Papists is not destitute of plausibility. Since the scriptures, say they, are differently expounded, in one way by general councils, and in another way by the monk of Wittenburgh, which is the safer guide? If the voice of the people be the voice of God, it will surely be the safer course to follow that interpretation which is adopted by almost the whole Christian world. Such is the reasoning of the Papists; and it may easily convince those who from their ignorance of ecclesiastical history know nothing of the frauds and stratagems of the clergy, of the inconsistency of general councils, and of the arbitrary control which the popes have exercised over assemblies which were supposed to be invested with deliberative powers.

But I have been carried too far into this discus-

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sion, and it is time to return to my own history. I soon began to perceive that my stipend of a hundred imperials would be insufficient to maintain me at Paris. Every thing is dear in that capital, except literature; and this may be acquired at so cheap a rate, that I seemed to have brought my knowledge to a most unprofitable market. In Paris there are shoals of rhetoricians, grammarians, and lawyers, commonly called lecturers or *repétiteurs*, who instruct youth for a very moderate remuneration. One of these lecturers, with whom I became acquainted, gave me a pathetic account of the distresses of literary men in Paris. This man was eminently skilled in medicine, and also in civil and ecclesiastical law; but he was not an instance of the truth of the proverb which gives wealth and dignity to physicians and lawyers—*dat Galenus opes, dat Justinianus honores*—for his learning was only exceeded by his poverty. The Parisians are certainly not guilty of estimating a man's pretensions to learning and philosophy by the length of his beard or the meanness of his attire; on the contrary, the splendour of a man's dress and equipage is considered a test of his skill in the science he professes; and he who wants these external recommendations will strive in vain to derive a subsistence from his knowledge or accomplishments. There was a Lyonese in the house where I lodged, who possessed great skill in cleansing and extracting teeth, but who could get no business while he lived in a frugal and parsimonious manner. At length he became better acquainted with the character of the Parisians; and, as his circumstances were growing desperate, he set up a splendid carriage, and dressed magnificently; by which expedient he sold his dentifrice, and became one of the most distinguished tooth-drawers in Paris. My landlord, who was a tailor, dressed in a most extravagant style; and he assured me, that if

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he neglected to do so, the Parisians would suppose him to be needy, and he should get no employment.

Both ancient and modern writers have noticed the extreme levity and fondness for trifles which characterise this nation; indeed the Parisians are called in the provinces, even by their own countrymen, *Badeaux de Paris*. In so populous a city as Paris, constituting in itself a sort of little world, and comprehending all that can gratify the ambition, the luxury, and the vanity of mankind, there is hardly any spectacle that can possess the attraction of novelty; and yet at the slightest noise Parisians will rush out of their houses to see what would scarcely excite the curiosity of a Danish rustic. Even their political commotions partake of the trifling and ludicrous character of the people. The gravest readers can hardly refrain from laughter on perusing the history of the Frondeurs, during whose ascendancy every thing, even down to their bread and pastry, was made in the shape of slingers; and the disturbances of the present century, which arose out of the bull of Pope Clement XI, were equally ridiculous, when partisans of both sexes wore their ribands *à la constitution*, or *à la Regence*, according as they espoused the interest of the pope or the regent. Mobs which appeared to threaten the government with destruction, have been dispersed and pacified by the most trivial occurrences;* and cardinal de Retz understood the character of the Parisians so thoroughly, that when he was informed of the tumultuous assemblage of a number of citizens who threatened vengeance and slaughter, he replied,

*This part of our author's biography was written in the year 1727. The reader may now smile at the opinions both of the biographer and of the cardinal; but Holberg spoke the language of his time, and it required another half century of oppression and misgovernment to render his remarks inapplicable to the character of the French nation.—Tr.

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calmly that the conspiracy would conclude, and the conspirators disperse as soon as the hour arrived for dining and taking their usual promenade. It must, indeed, be an event of extraordinary importance which would induce a Parisian to forego his accustomed amusements.

The account which my legal acquaintance had given me of the state of literature in Paris, left me no hope of improving my circumstances by teaching; but he also gave me some advice as to the means of economising my resources, of which I gladly availed myself. I had been living hitherto in the faubourg of St Germain, a quarter of the town much frequented by foreigners who are in search only of amusement, on account of its proximity to the theatres, public gardens, and other places of public resort. Here also the best taverns are situated, and the expenses of living are proportioned to the excellence of the entertainment which is to be met with in this part of the city. Frenchmen, however, who come to Paris from the provinces, generally take up their residence in what is called the quarter of the university, where every thing is to be obtained at a much cheaper rate, and where, moreover, the air is purer, and the water more wholesome. In the faubourg of St Germain the water of the Seine is generally drunk, which, though it agrees with Parisians, has a disastrous effect upon foreigners, who, before they become seasoned to it, are generally attacked with fever and dysentery. This the Parisians call paying toll to the Seine; the tax fell heavy upon me, for I laboured under diarrhœa for a month, having nothing to console me in my disorder but the reflection that the bowels of almost all strangers undergo a similar penance.

In a short time I made such proficiency in the science of domestic economy, that I even surpassed my master, who would sometimes refer foreigners

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who consulted him to me, as one who was a far greater adept in the art of economising than himself. On leaving the faubourg St Germain, I established myself in a cheap lodging near the Sorbonne. This quarter of the town was much frequented by poor French and Irish Catholic students. With the latter I soon became intimate, in consequence of my knowledge of the English language; and I reckoned among my Irish acquaintances several ministers and privy counsellors of the chevalier de St George, whose friendship however did not tend to increase my expenses; for, notwithstanding their high rank, they differed in no respect from the meanest classes of society in their mode of living. They did not object to beer and tobacco, if nothing more tempting could be set before them after dinner; and even at dinner, in the absence of greater delicacies, their lordships would often condescend to discuss a piece of coarse, musty bacon. I remember being invited to a dinner given in celebration of the nuptials of an Irish nobleman, who gave us nothing but mouldy cheese, sour bread, and wine of the thinnest quality. There was indeed a second course, consisting of kisses; for, according to the Irish custom, every body kissed the new married peeress. To me the bride was more insupportable than the cheese, for her breath had a worse flavour; and as to her face, I should have been afraid to meet it on a dark night; in a word, she abused the privilege of being frightful.

Most of the Irish who live at Paris have pensions from the government, and are educated at the public expense. They declare that they have been compelled to quit their country on account of their attachment to the Catholic faith, and they all boast of their high families, and the immense estates they have sacrificed for their religion. I could never, however, discover in them any indication of high

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birth; for, except their pride, every thing in their character and deportment was vulgar. They lived indeed in so coarse and barbarous a way that I at length withdrew myself from their society, and returned to the French, whose polished manners are irresistibly attractive, notwithstanding all their levity and frivolity. There is no rule however without an exception; and it so happened that all the Frenchmen who lived in the same house with me were querulous and hypochondriacal, though in other respects they were persons of excellent character; and as I was hypochondriacal myself, I could not help thinking that I had attracted, as it were magnetically, all the melancholy in Paris to one spot; for if the whole city had been explored, it would have been difficult to find as many hypochondriacal subjects elsewhere, as were collected in this single house. Of all my fellow-lodgers the most irritable was a young student in divinity; he was all pepper, but a worthy, friendly man, on whom the utmost reliance might be placed. Such was my confidence in his integrity, that on leaving Paris soon after for Italy, I left a part of my baggage in his custody.

Many of my countrymen came afterwards to Paris; among them was Michæl Rög, one of our most distinguished engravers. He was at the public school of Bergen at the same time with myself, under the celebrated Lintrupius, and afterwards became a member of the university. He neglected literature however, and devoted himself to the art of engraving, in which he soon arrived at great eminence. At Paris, upon the exhibition of some specimens of his skill, he was appointed one of the king's engravers. I had lived a year and a half at Paris, when, not satisfied with having seen France, England, Germany, and Holland, I was tormented with the desire of visiting more remote countries. The passion for travelling grows stronger by indul-

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gence; and he who is once seized with it can no more stop short, than the despairing lover who has precipitated himself from the fatal rock. I had been told by a French student, that it was possible to go from Paris to Rome for a sum scarcely exceeding twenty imperials. Delighted to hear this intelligence, I eagerly inquired into all the particulars; and from this time I could think of nothing but a journey to Italy, though reason suggested a thousand obstacles to my undertaking such an expedition. My weak constitution, my narrow circumstances, and the dangers and difficulties I might expect to encounter on such a journey, all presented themselves to my mind in my calmer moments; but that enterprising spirit which distinguishes my countrymen, and which impels them to hazard every thing for the gratification of their curiosity, finally prevailed, and I determined to set out immediately for Italy; a resolution which exposed me to some malicious insinuations in my own country, for it was reported there that I had changed my religion, and had no intention of returning.

It was in the beginning of the month of August that I took my passage in a boat which conveyed me to Auxerre. I concluded that the religious zeal of the people of this city must have been greater than that of the Parisians, if their piety was to be measured by the size of the colossal statue of St Christopher, which is taller than the colossal statue of the same saint at Paris, although the latter is so large that the ceremony of the mass is performed between its legs. The whole journey from Paris to Auxerre, though it occupied some days, cost me but a trifling sum. The impossibility of sleeping, from the number of passengers, and from the noise which is usually made on board the vessel, is the chief objection to this conveyance. In other respects the journey was sufficiently agreeable; for the banks of the

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river were almost uninterruptedly clothed with wood or waving corn; and villas, either situated on its margin, or glittering in the distance, enhanced the beauty of the scene, while jests and merry tales went round, and contributed to promote the good humour of the company. I observed that most of the passengers made their arrangements for travelling on foot; and, in imitation of so laudable an example, which was well suited to the state of my finances, I went on foot to Chalons, the whole of which journey occupied about six days. I selected for my companions some of the passengers who seemed to be of the most respectable class; but I learned on this occasion the danger of trusting too much to appearances; for out of three companions, the one in whom I placed the least confidence proved to be the only honest man, while the others turned out to be most atrocious scoundrels. During the whole journey I heard nothing but lying, boasting, and obscenity; all infallible marks of the vicious and depraved character of my companions. They appeared, however, to be no strangers to Parisian elegance and refinement; for one of them swore that he could give a list of more than twenty women of condition from whom he had received favours; and he also mentioned some new and ingenious oaths he had learnt at Paris, none of which, he assured us, had yet been introduced into the provinces. Though they were Catholics, they seemed to treat their saints with very little ceremony. On one occasion a shower compelled us to take shelter in the cottage of an old woman, who informed us that there had been a procession on that day, and that this shower had been granted to the prayers of the inhabitants by some saint who was the special patron of the village. While the old woman was holding forth with uplifted hands and eyes upon the goodness of the saint, one of my companions, who

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was drying his wet clothes at the fire, exclaimed, '*Que le diable vous emporte avec votre b—— de saint.*' They used to say that, if they had the power of reforming the calendar, they would expunge most of the saints from it; but that Noah, whom they had chosen for their patron, should retain his place, because wine was said to have been first made by the patriarch. Yet these men, whose whole lives were spent in riot and debauchery, would every night throw themselves upon their knees before the bed, pray with great earnestness, and express their surprise that I did not do the same thing. For my part, I was astonished at the audacity of these scoundrels, who, while they were practising every kind of iniquity, could venture so frequently to approach the divine presence. The third of my companions, who was an apothecary at Lyons, I considered as my body-guard; while he was present I feared nothing, for he had solemnly assured me, that if the others should attempt to offer me any violence, he had the strength and the resolution to restrain both of them. One evening, having by mistake turned out of the public path, I lost sight of my protector, and found myself alone with one of the other scoundrels, whereupon I became exceedingly alarmed. My companion, pretending that I was the cause of the mistake, loaded me with abuse, and, laying his hand upon the hilt of his sword, threatened to run me through the body. I was in great terror, and looked around for a place of refuge; but I knew not whither to run, and began to think all escape hopeless, as my companion was not only much stronger but swifter of foot than myself, when fortunately, while he was endeavouring to seek an outlet from the bushes in which we were entangled, he lost his sword. This loss, though it increased his fury, was a great relief to me; I examined the bushes, and felt about

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the ground to see whether I could find the sword; fully resolving, if I should succeed, not to return a weapon which had just been pointed at my throat. At length we met some countrymen, who conducted us into the right road; and we rejoined our companions at an inn, where I related what had happened to the apothecary, and we determined to part from our profligate fellow-travellers; but, as we were only a few miles distant from Chalons, we subsequently altered our resolution, and dissembled the feelings which we entertained towards them.

At Chalons I embarked on board a vessel which took me to Lyons. Among the passengers was a certain abbé, well skilled in the philosophy of Descartes, and an excellent philologist, who afforded me great amusement. His learning was only equalled by his ill manners; he attacked every body with coarse jokes, and was at last repaid on all sides in his own coin.

I rested some days at Lyons, a city which in extent, and in the general magnificence of its edifices, yields to Paris alone. The Lyonese differ so entirely, in their character, manners, and language, from the French of the north, that I seemed transported to another country. The death of Louis the Fourteenth was at this time the subject of general conversation; and, as prodigies usually precede or follow the death of great princes, so on this occasion it was currently reported and believed by the people, that the king's ghost had appeared in different parts of France at the same moment. There were other stories afloat of a similar kind, which I did not however perfectly understand, in consequence of my imperfect acquaintance with the Basque language, in which they were narrated. That language is a sort of mongrel dialect between Italian and Spanish; thus the people in this part of the country say *lega* and *gallina*, instead of *lieu* and *poule*.

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Hence those who are acquainted only with the Basque language, can scarcely carry on a conversation with other Frenchmen without the assistance of an interpreter.

At Lyons I again embarked on board a vessel which conveyed me very expeditiously to Avignon; the boat was not drawn by horses, but went down the stream of the Rhone, which is so rapid in some places that, without a skilful steersman at the helm, a vessel would be exposed to considerable danger. In this way, without sails or oars, we made forty Basque leagues in the space of two days. There remained seventeen leagues of my journey by land through the country called Provence, which I performed on foot with much pleasure and gratification. Provence abounds with cities and towns; and the country, richly variegated with meadows, corn-fields, and vineyards, has the appearance of one continued garden. All that can embellish life, as well as every thing that can contribute to its essential enjoyments, is to be found here in boundless profusion. When I arrived at the end of this journey, I reflected for a moment on the folly of having embarked in an enterprise which had exposed me to so many difficulties and dangers; but I consoled myself with the belief that I should soon see an end of them. I was, besides, delighted with the appearance of the city of Marseilles, in which many new and interesting objects engaged my attention. The number of people from eastern countries, the gallies, and the slaves, Turkish as well as Christian, clanking their chains as they pass through the city, awaken the curiosity of a stranger; and even the melancholy which is felt at the sight of these unfortunate wretches is mingled with that species of pleasure which novelty seldom fails to excite. Besides these gallies, the port was filled with other vessels about to set sail for Constanti-

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nople, Smyrna, Alexandria, and all parts of the Mediterranean. The mere sight of the Mediterranean sea gave me pleasure, and banished all inquietude from my mind. I imagined myself in a new world. Beyond the city of Marseilles are seen numbers of elegant villas, either grouped together or at short distances from each other. I was particularly struck by the exchange, called by the natives *les loges*, as well on account of its sumptuous structure, as the number of merchants to be met with there, whose dress, manners, and language, afford a striking contrast to those of European nations. The natives of Marseilles, however, seemed to me to be inferior to Frenchmen generally, in point of elegance and refinement of manners. Hence Italians, who designate national character by certain epithets, are in the habit of saying, *Marsiglia la brutta.*

Having spent eight days at Marseilles, I took my passage on board a vessel bound for Genoa. The entrance of the port of Marseilles is difficult, for it is necessary to make almost a complete circuit before you get to the open sea; but the harbour is the more secure on that account, since the waves even of the roughest sea are so completely broken before they approach the shore, that they reach it with a subdued and expiring sound. I omit all circumstantial details respecting wind and weather, and shall only observe that I was seized during this voyage with a fever, which was probably occasioned by my having eaten too large a quantity of grapes, which are apt to produce febrile disorders, if they are eaten before they are quite ripe. For eight days I lay in the master's cabin, scarcely able to move; the rest of the passengers went on shore to enjoy themselves almost every day. On one occasion I recollect hearing them mention, on their return, that they had heard a curious dialect, which

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was neither French nor Italian, in a Ligurian town where they passed the night. One of the words they mentioned was *tosa*, a waiting-maid; and as the Norwegians call a waiting-maid *tosa* or *tausa* at this day, I had no hesitation in classing this among the Gothic or Lombardian words, as others have observed with respect to *tasca, stuffo, stalla, stivali, &c.*

When I arrived at Genoa, I hoped that by having recourse to medicine I should be able to get the better of my disorder; but my fever became so violent that I was obliged to keep my bed. From a continued fever it became a quartan, which the Genoese assured me would last the whole winter; for this was the usual duration of the quartan, which commonly attacked in the autumn those who were seized with continued fever in the summer. There is a passage in Juvenal,

Autumno quartanam sperantibus segris,

from which it may be inferred that fevers of the same description prevailed in Italy in his day. I should have borne my misfortune patiently, if it had happened in any other country than Italy, and in any other city of Italy than Genoa, where I found honesty, compassion, and every other Christian virtue, utterly proscribed among the keepers of taverns. The Genoese, who are described by the Italians themselves as a faithless race, *gente senza fede*, are not likely to merit a better character from people of other countries; and the innkeepers of Genoa, whom even the Genoese denounce, must have reached the very climax of iniquity. My landlord charged me not only for the nights, but for the hours I reposed in his house; and when weakness compelled me to remain in my bed during the day, he demanded *tanto per la notte, è tanto per il giorno*—so much for the night, and so much for the day.

At length my disorder reached such a height, that

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my life was in danger. It may easily be imagined how I reproached myself with my folly for having undertaken this journey, when I might have passed the winter comfortably and cheerfully among my friends at Paris. I lay here in a state of destitution; I had no one to attend to my bodily complaints, no one to console me even in the hour of death. I strove indeed as much as possible to conceal my sufferings, lest I should be tormented by the monks, whose importunities would infallibly, in my exhausted condition, have hurried me to the grave. I put my sole trust in Providence, and with a firm spirit I bore all my sufferings in silence; in short, I struggled against my disease with such success, that I at length passed the crisis; and at this juncture chance threw in my way a friend whose kind offices soon changed the aspect of my fortunes. I was sitting at my window, after the violence of my fever had somewhat abated, when I perceived a young Frenchman with whom I was slightly acquainted. I beckoned him into the hotel, and entered into a pathetic detail of all my misfortunes. Moved by the account of my sufferings, and indignant at the conduct of the innkeeper, he left me to remonstrate with that person. He met however with so unceremonious a reception from the innkeeper, that from words they soon proceeded to blows. I witnessed the strife through a key-hole, and was delighted to see my generous champion pummelling the rogue's head with the knuckles of his left hand, while the palm of his right hand was applied in quick succession to the leathern jaws of his adversary. When the battle was concluded, my friend returned to my apartment, and recommended me to pack up my effects and quit the hotel immediately. I left this den of iniquity, and was conducted by the young Frenchman to another inn, where I soon gained strength enough to be able to walk out

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on the days when my fever intermitted. I admired the noble edifices of this city, which exceeded in magnificence all that I had heard or read of them. In the street called *Strada Nuova*, every house seems to be a palace rather than a private residence; in other streets, though not so uniformly magnificent as the Strada Nuova, elegant marble buildings abound. The churches are also remarkable for their marble pavements and the splendour of their architectural embellishments. In this city I first heard an Italian concert; it partook in some measure of the character of French music, for they used horns and trumpets, instruments which have long since been disused in other parts of Italy; a circumstance which may be accounted for by the vicinity of Genoa to France. In vocal music, the singers who take the first part generally affect a plaintive, whining intonation; so that one might almost suppose they were undergoing corporal punishment, and that the musical director was compelling them to sing against their will. I have noticed the same whining style of singing in other parts of Italy; and it is not without reason therefore, that the French tax the Italian singers with these weeping propensities.

The form of government in Genoa is aristocratical, the prince of the senate being styled the doge. The dignity of doge is not permanent, as at Venice, but passes from one senator to another. It happened, at the time I was at Genoa, that the chief magistrate had just retired from his office, and the senate was proceeding to the creation of a new doge. The election of the rector of an university often occasions a greater sensation in other countries than that of a doge in Genoa. The inhabitants, accustomed to the spectacle, do not even go out of their houses to witness the procession which takes place at a new election. I happened to be strolling through the city, when I met a company of soldiers

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who were almost all Corsicans. Upon inquiring what was going forward, I was told that the new doge was approaching; and shortly afterwards I saw him, surrounded by a number of senators, going to church to return thanks for his election. I could scarcely refrain from laughing at the drummers in this procession, who struck the drum and their drum-sticks alternately; this practice however is not peculiar to the drummers of Genoa, for it is common in other parts of Italy.

I staid a fortnight at Genoa, in which time I had an opportunity of making some observations on the character of its inhabitants. Their manners are polite and easy; even the lower classes of the people are not deficient in this respect; but they are cunning, faithless, and such marvellous adepts in the art of lying, that even the Cretans in the days of Epimenides must have yielded the palm of mendacity to the Genoese. I do not include in this censure the patricians, to whom I had no access, and who are probably as exempt from vulgar vices as the nobility of England; but I speak of the common people, who certainly could not cultivate the art with more assiduity, if the doge had offered a premium to the most accomplished liar in his dominions.

The young Frenchman to whose humanity and attention I was so much indebted, remained at Genoa a few days, and then returned in the same vessel in which I had arrived. He passed everywhere for a Frenchman, for he spoke the French language so perfectly that one might have supposed him to be a native of Paris or Orleans; but I afterwards ascertained that he had stated his real country to no one but his landlord, who, upon producing the book in which the names of foreigners are registered by order of the senate, showed me the entry in his own hand-writing, *Carolo Montford*,

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Danese. I was delighted to find that I had received so much kindness from a countryman, who on his part was equally ignorant of my name and country; for I represented myself to be a native of Aix-la-Chapelle, and travelled in Italy under the name of Michael Rög, my friend and townsman of that name having furnished me with his passport, when I left Paris. Shortly after the departure of my friend Montford, I embarked on board a vessel for Rome. I was still a prey to anxiety, for my quartan fever continued with little abatement, and I was apprehensive of being attacked by the pirates who infest the Mediterranean till the beginning of autumn. Our vessel was furnished with two guns, which would have availed us little against a well-appointed sloop of war. Besides the sailors, we had on board forty passengers, who would have been of little assistance in case of attack; for among them were ten monks, who trembled at the very name of a Turkish corsair, and six Italian women, who occupied the captain's cabin, while the rest of the passengers lay promiscuously on deck or in the rigging; a miserable lodging for a patient labouring under a fever. Among the passengers was a French captain, who had served in Germany; and to his kindness I was indebted for some alleviation of my misery; for he accommodated me with a great coat and other covering, while he himself lay exposed to the inclemency of the weather.

We had not yet lost sight of Genoa, when we saw one of the boats belonging to the custom-house officers, called by the Italians *Sbirri*, whose duty it is to examine the merchandise on board vessels entering and leaving the port of Genoa, and, if they discover any contraband goods, to levy penalties on the owners. There are no vessels, excepting those of the Turkish pirates, at the sight of which merchants are so much alarmed, especially if they

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have reason to fear too scrutinizing a search. We were detained two hours before we were allowed to continue our voyage. We had made but a few leagues when the wind suddenly fell, and this calm was succeeded by a heavy gale, which compelled us to make for a port of Liguria, which the Italians call Porto Verde. Here we were detained nine days by contrary winds, the whole of that time being spent jovially by most of the passengers. For my part, I withdrew myself from their society as much as possible, alleging that my fever rendered abstinence and a spare diet necessary; an excuse which appeared sufficiently reasonable, while it suited the state of my finances. All the Italian females remained shut up in the master's cabin during the whole of this time, with the exception of a Roman woman, who sometimes went ashore with her husband. The Frenchmen, who are the most social people in the world, used every effort to overcome the taciturnity and haughtiness of this woman, but without success. I was the only passenger with whom she would sometimes condescend to enter into familiar conversation; an exception to her general demeanour which gave no uneasiness to her husband; for I had become such a miserable skeleton that, so far from being an object of jealousy, I looked like a person to whose custody a Turkish haram might have been safely intrusted.

The continuance of adverse winds at length induced the monks to suggest to some of the passengers the expediency of raising a subscription, to be expended in a procession for the purpose of propitiating some saint whose bones were said to be buried in that port. The proposition pleased the Spaniards and Italians, who thought the saint was only to be appeased by prayer; but it was opposed by the Frenchmen, who pretended however, lest they should be accused of open impiety, that they

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were willing to deposit their share, on condition that the money should be returned if the saint failed to accede to their petitions. The monks, perceiving that they were laughed at, addressed themselves to me, whom they supposed to be a German, and complained bitterly of the incredulity and profaneness which generally characterised the French nation.

At length the wind blew from a favourable quarter, and we once more set sail. We arrived in a short time at Leghorn, a maritime town of Tuscany, and sailed from thence to Civita Vecchia. Between Leghorn and Civita Vecchia we perceived, in the middle of the night, a vessel coasting slowly along shore, which we suspected to be a pirate. The steersman, who sat at the helm, asked three times with a loud voice who she was, and whence she came; but no answer was returned, and this silence tended to confirm our suspicions. One of the ships called by the Italians *Conserva*, which protect merchant vessels, came to our assistance. The sailors were placed at the guns, the passengers were furnished with arms, and every preparation was made for the combat. I was awakened by the noise, and being informed of the cause of it, I was seized with such a fit of shivering that I expected a fresh attack of my quartan. But when this fit subsided, I may boast that not a groan, nor a cowardly expression escaped me, except perhaps my declaring my conviction that every soul on board would perish; a conviction which afforded me much consolation, for calamity is deprived of half its severity when it is shared with great numbers. The Italian women, throwing aside all the reserve which characterises their nation, rushed out of their cabin with their hair dishevelled; and the vessel reechoed with their screams and lamentations, until they were admonished by the sailors that this excessive afflic-

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tion was unavailing and unseasonable. They then became silent, but continued to wring their hands with intense agony, and with suppressed sobs to call upon heaven for assistance. The monks displayed as little firmness as the women; for these persons, though they preach of the necessity of making death the subject of our constant reflections, seldom contemplate their own decease with satisfaction, or sing, like swans, in their dying moments. Some of them were seen striking their heads with their fists, while others were stretched upon the ground, invoking the aid of their favourite saints; and neither the entreaties nor the reproaches of the other passengers could induce them to suspend these unmanly lamentations, and betake themselves to their own and the ship's defence. I must myself at this moment have presented a ludicrous spectacle; pale and emaciated as I was, I was placed, sword in hand, in order of battle, and in that position implored the aid of St Anthony in common with my fellow passengers. But the pirates, neglecting us, attacked the other ship; and while they were engaged in attacking, and ultimately capturing that vessel, we took the opportunity of making all the sail we could, and effected our escape. I might here relieve the dryness of this narrative by introducing, according to the approved usage, a number of striking incidents and imposing embellishments. I might—for who could convict me of falsehood?—detail how many hours we fought with the Turks, how many prodigies of valour we performed, and how many pirates I slew with my single arm. But if this little work ever becomes a subject of animadversion, it shall rather be censured for its sterility than its rodomontade. I am much more anxious to avoid the charge of having written a tissue of amusing fictions, than that of having produced such a narrative as might be expected from the Spaniard

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Don Juan, who went to Rome, and having hired a chamber in which he slept two days to recover from his fatigues, went back immediately to Spain. Most of the passengers attributed our preservation to St Anthony; but I was more inclined to ascribe it to the perfidy of our captain, who consulted his own safety, and abandoned the vessel with which he was bound to fight in concert, in the moment of her distress. We talked, as is usual when any great danger is passed, of the fate which would probably have awaited us, if we had fallen into the hands of the pirates. It was agreed on all hands that I was good for nothing in my feeble condition, and that I should certainly have been thrown into the sea. I persuaded myself, on the contrary, that my knowledge of languages would not only have secured my person, but probably have led the way to my preferment at Algiers, where I might possibly have been made secretary to some person of distinction.

Having escaped from this danger, we arrived at length at Civita Vecchia, where I determined to proceed to Rome on foot, thinking it a greater evil to contend with the tide of the Tiber for three successive days. I found the whole road leading to Rome infested with serpents, so that I could scarcely venture to take any repose on the ground during the whole journey. It is, in my opinion, owing to this nuisance, rather than—what is commonly believed—to the unwholesome quality of the air about Rome, that no one can pass the night in the open air without danger; for if the quality of the air were unwholesome, it is singular that the sailors belonging to vessels lying in harbour, who are in the habit of sleeping in the open air, suffer no inconvenience. It cannot be denied that strangers who go to Rome in the summer are subject to disease, and that consequently travellers who visit

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this city for pleasure, commonly defer their journey till the beginning of October. It is not easy to determine the cause of the insalubrity which is usually attributed to the climate of Rome; for the situation of that city is the same as it was formerly, and no mention is made by ancient writers of the air being unfavourable to strangers. Admitting that modern Rome is somewhat more distant from the sea, this circumstance will not account for the difference in the quality of the air; for the air of Civita Vecchia, which is a maritime town, is still more unhealthy than that of Rome. After a journey of two days, I entered Rome at the gate near the Vatican; and here the noble church of St Peter, and the papal palace, bursting upon my view, banished for the moment all anxiety from my mind. Above all, I was struck with the magnificence of the church; wherever the eye turned, it was gratified by some striking exhibition of modern art, or some monument of ancient splendour. When I had in some measure gratified my curiosity, I went through the city in search of a hotel; and in that part of it which is now called *Piazza di Spagna*, at the end of two hours, I found an inn, where I remained confined a whole month, endeavouring to subdue the obstinacy of my fever by medicine. My medical adviser was a monk, who was also apothecary to the monastery of St Trinity, which was situated not far from my inn; but medicine, instead of alleviating, seemed rather to aggravate my disorder; and as I despaired of vanquishing my quartan by pills and powders, I determined to rely upon strict diet alone, the good effect of which I had on more than one occasion experienced. I quitted my hotel at the end of a month, in consequence of the annoyance I suffered from my landlord, a pthisical subject who slept in the next apartment to mine, and who spent so large a portion of his nights in spitting and,

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coughing, that I could obtain no rest. I was annoyed in another way by his wife, a drunken, debauched woman; who, being accustomed to throw lures in the way of her lodgers, and cajole them of their money, attributed my fever to too much temperance and continence, and assured me that wine and women were the best remedies for it. She extolled the conduct of some of her German lodgers, who, by drinking and other indulgences, had escaped the diseases to which foreigners are subject at Rome; and she assured me that a German youth, who had refused to follow their example, had lately died in her house in a wretched condition. This philosophy was so little suited to my taste, that I left the house, and went to live at a cheaper rate, and far more respectably, at the hotel of a Piedmontese named Giovanni Battista. He was an honest, obliging man, who gave me such useful instructions in Roman economy, that having purchased the necessary apparatus for cooking, I dressed my own dinners and suppers. This is very commonly done by travellers in Italy, where the hotel-keepers, before they go to market, enter the apartments of their lodgers, and inquire what they shall purchase for them. They return from the market with meat, herbs, vegetables, &c., and leave the cooking of the provisions to their lodgers.

I shall not enter into any minute details of my culinary exploits, or expatiate upon the manner in which I seasoned a ragout, or served up an Italian *minestra*. I am aware that, as a faithful historian of the events of my life, I can scarcely justify the omission of such important details; but I would rather incur the charge of negligence in this particular, than expose myself to the criticism of French connoisseurs, who would be sure to convict me of a thousand violations of the first principles of the culinary art. If, during my residence at Rome, I

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made little progress in polite studies, I at any rate gained some insight into that solid branch of science which is acquired in the kitchen. I knew exactly how much time and fuel it took to make a soup or boil a cabbage, and how many Ave Marias were required to toss up an omelet with success; so that if the art of cookery is entitled to any respect, it cannot be said of me, that I went to Rome an ignoramus and returned as ignorant as I went. If the champions of universal knowledge think that a man cannot be called all-accomplished who is unable to mend his own shoes, surely he is still less entitled to that appellation who cannot in case of necessity cook his own dinner. That my time, however, might not be wholly consumed in these culinary occupations, my pen and paper were commonly placed by the fire-side, and I held a book in one hand, while I stirred my soup or porridge with the other. I learned to my cost that it was no easy matter to play the cook and philosopher at the same time; for it often happened, while I was reading or writing with too much attention, that my soup would boil over, or my macaroni be burnt to a cinder. I was ashamed at first of this mean employment, especially when I called to mind the style of elegance in which I had formerly lived; but I soon got rid of this feeling, when I perceived that nothing was more common in Italy. In my hotel there were two Neapolitan noblemen whom I often caught engaged in the same occupation; and when the doors of our chambers were open, a sort of concert was made by our respective frying-pans, in which mine being the smaller pan played the treble, and theirs the bass.

One of the results of my observations in the course of my travels, is that men live more temperately in proportion as they are farther removed from the north. I observed very few instances of

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drunkenness in France; none in Italy. The Norwegians are considered free livers by the Danes; the Danes and Germans disapprove the spare diet of the French; the French are considered gluttons by the Italians; and the Italians, again, denounce the parsimonious living of the Spaniards. In Italy it is not unusual, even in the palaces of the nobles, to produce again at supper the remains of what has been served at dinner. During the month I remained at my hotel, I was struck by the solitude which reigned in this large house, comprehending a vast number of spacious apartments. Most of the houses in Rome have the same deserted appearance; for although this city is nearly equal in extent to Paris, it is inferior in respect to population to many cities of Europe, the whole number of inhabitants scarcely amounting to 200,000. Hence houses are let at a cheap rate, except during the time of the jubilee or the conclaves, when great numbers of strangers are attracted to Rome. For this reason the Roman citizens think a frequent change of popes beneficial to the city, and the longevity of Clement the Eleventh has rendered him extremely unpopular. My hotel continued nearly unoccupied till the end of December; but at this time, when all the comedians, pantomimists, and rope-dancers in Italy flock to Rome, it was filled with people of this class, whose perpetual clamours and shoutings exasperated my fever at night, and interrupted my studies during the day. After Christmas ten or twelve companies of comedians come to Rome. Each company selects a play, which they continue to act without changing the performance. Our company had chosen a play not differing materially from the *Médecin malgré lui* of Moliere, in which the manager played the part of the doctor during the whole winter. Hence he was invariably addressed as *signor dottore;* and he answered so readily to

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this title, that he might really have passed for a medical man. It might be supposed that the players did not consult their own interests in confining themselves to a single play, the frequent repetition of which would fatigue the same audience. But the fact was, that amidst the vast concourse of strangers who came to Rome at this season, there was always a succession of fresh spectators, who ran from one amusement to another. During all this time I suffered under my quartan, none of the medicines to which I had again recourse affording me the slightest relief. Under these circumstances some of my friends recommended me to consult a Roman cobbler, who was said to charm away this complaint without the aid of medicine; but I have always detested those impostors, who prey upon the credulity of weak minds; and I preferred struggling with my disease to exposing myself to the mockery of their pretended remedies. The cobbler himself was often sick, and I recollected the passage of Ennius—

—Non habeo denique rauci Marsum Augurem,
Non vicanos haruspices, non de circo Astrologos,
Non Isiacos conjectores, non interpretes somniûm;
Non enim sunt ii aut scientiâ aut arte divini,
Sed superstitiosi Vates, impudentesque harioli,
Aut inertes, aut insani, aut quibus egestas imperat;
Qui sibi semitam non sapiunt, alteri monstrant viam,
Quibus divitias pollicentur ab ils drachmam ipsi petunt.

When therefore my friends reproached me with my incredulity, my answer was, 'If the cobbler knows any thing beyond his last, why does not he cure himself?'

My fever however did not prevent me from going out almost daily to make my observations in different parts of the city. I was a constant frequenter of the public libraries, especially the Minerva library, and the library of science. In these the librarians were exceedingly obliging; they

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not only attended to the slightest gesture made by the students, but they furnished every body with pens, ink, and paper, gratuitously. No one was permitted, however, to read prohibited works without the permission of the inquisitors. Hence I was starved, like another Tantalus, in the midst of abundance; for almost every book I asked for belonged to the prohibited class. I remember on one occasion obtaining Bayle's Dictionary from one of the attendants, a simple, unlettered monk, who was severely reprimanded for his negligence by the librarian, a Dominican father, and fellow of the college of inquisitors. I endeavoured to overcome the moroseness of this man, but without success; for he referred me to some officer of the palace, who alone, he said, possessed the power of granting a dispensation. I felt no inclination to incur the trouble, and perhaps the danger, of being examined by this officer; and accordingly I left the Minerva library, and went to the library of science, where, as the librarian was a layman, I hoped to have less difficulty in overcoming his scruples. But here also I met with a similar repulse, although I professed myself a heretic, whom the reading of prohibited books could not make worse than I was. Hence my studies were restricted within very narrow limits; they were chiefly confined to Roman antiquities, and some modern descriptions of Rome, which were a guide to me in my walks through the city, and amidst the monuments of ancient grandeur. Almost every day, when the weather was fine, I rambled amidst ruins and fragments of stone, holding extracts from the books I had consulted in my hand, which I used as a kind of *carte du pays*. I was nearly a month looking for the Porta Trigemina of the Horatii, which I discovered at last by these means. The modern Romans know so little about the monuments of antiquity, that if you ask for the

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Pantheon, you will be answered, *Non loso;* if you inquire for the amphitheatre of Vespasian, the reply will be *Non intendo,* although these monuments have, in a great degree, escaped the injuries of time, and may therefore be readily pointed out. It is necessary therefore to know the modern names of these ancient relics; ask for the Coliseum, and you will find the amphitheatre of Vespasian; inquire for the Rotunda, and you will be directed to the Pantheon. I did not suffer my attention to be so much absorbed by the relics of ancient Rome as to neglect what was worthy of examination in the modern city. I explored all the porticos, I visited the principal palaces, and most of the monasteries and churches in the city. The *Chiesa Nova* possessed great attractions for me, on account of the eloquent sermons which were daily delivered there by three fathers of the order of preachers. One mounted from the pulpit as another descended from it, so that in the course of an hour and a half three sermons were delivered, one of which was always devoted to the praise of some saint. In these panegyrics of saints it would have been difficult to determine, whether the elegance of the diction were greater than the absurdity of the arguments which were usually employed. The preachers were always eloquent; but they appeared as scrupulously to avoid every argument which was not ridiculous, as their auditors seemed anxious to pin their faith upon every thing which was most incredible. I remember hearing one of these preachers illustrate in the following manner the efficacy of the intercession of the Virgin Mary. There was once, said he, a man named John, whom the devil wished to ensnare on account of his devotion to the Virgin Mary; but the devil was baffled, for every morning John took care to protect himself with an *Ave Maria.* At length John was invited to a marriage-

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feast by some of his relations; and the devil, hearing of the circumstance, threw himself in John's way, as he was returning, half drunk, from the festival, in the shape of a beautiful virgin. John at first resisted; but the virgin resorted to such blandishments, that he at last yielded to the temptation. In the morning, when he had recovered from the effects of the last night's debauch, and reflected seriously upon what he had done, he was covered with shame, and was unable to say his accustomed *Ave Maria*. The devil attacked him in this defenceless situation, before he had fully repented of the sin he had committed; and as John was crossing a river in a boat, he was upset, and remained three days fixed to the bed of the river by his arch tormentor. The Virgin Mary, perceiving how cruelly John was besieged by the devil, interceded in his behalf to her son, who, ascending the judgment-seat, pardoned his offence; whereupon John, being freed from the power of the devil, rose like a cork to the top of the river, and being cast ashore, was restored to animation by the attentions of the Virgin Mary. John afterwards dedicated a chapel to his patroness, and lived to a good old age. I have heard many other absurdities of this kind, which I am ashamed to repeat, and which seemed to be invented with an effrontery proportioned to the readiness with which they were believed.

The decorations of the churches, and the music which is performed in them, gratify at once the senses of sight and hearing. The instrumental pleased me more than the vocal music of the Italians; for the latter, as I have before observed, is characterised by a disagreeable whining intonation. I saw Clement the Eleventh only on two occasions, for his years and infirmities prevented him from appearing often in public, though in the early period of his pontificate he had made himself extremely

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popular, and was in the habit of granting access to every body on the first day of every month. He was carried to the chapel in a chair by four Swiss body-guards; and as he was borne along, he scattered on all sides his apostolical benedictions, which usually produce very beneficial effects upon the faithful. My incredulity, I suppose, prevented me from deriving any benefit from them, for I did not experience the slightest remission of my quartan. The cardinals followed, each in his turn kissing the pope's finger, on which was placed the fisherman's ring; after which his holiness exclaimed with a tremulous voice, *Dominus vobiscum.* Here I must unburthen my conscience by making confession of two offences or peccadilloes, according to the judgment that may be passed upon them, which I committed at Rome. One was, that as the pope passed I fell upon my knees with the rest of the multitude. This is a ceremony to which every body who goes to see the pope must submit; and to leave Rome without seeing his holiness, is considered such a mark of stupidity, that it has passed into a proverb. It is true that I am a Lutheran; but I am not one of those who deem it a crime to treat a sovereign, whose religion differs from our own, with the usual marks of reverence. The other offence to which I allude may be thought the more inexcusable as I was not obliged to commit it. I ascended on my knees the steps which are said to have been taken from the court-house of Pontius Pilate, and which our Saviour is said to have trodden when he was taken before that judge. I considered that such a mark of reverence was not inappropriate, if the relic were really genuine; and that if it were not genuine, I might be excused for complying with the usual custom, since even the error was a proof of my piety and humility.

In this manner I passed the whole winter at

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Rome, when I began to think of returning to my own country; but I dreaded to expose myself again to the dangers from which I had escaped in my late voyage.

To return by land was a more arduous, but upon the whole a safer undertaking; and I finally decided upon this course, which indeed the straitness of my circumstances almost compelled me to take. I had besides some hope that by constant exercise I should overcome the obstinacy of the quartan, under which I still laboured.

Accordingly, about the end of February I left Rome; and after a journey of fourteen days I arrived at Florence in tolerable health and spirits. I was afraid at first, as I was troubled with a shortness of breathing, that my strength would fail; and I therefore walked slowly, as delay was of no importance to me, except sometimes when I found it expedient to quicken my pace for the sake of arriving at an inn where superior accommodation was to be obtained. By this continued walking I gradually became so case-hardened, that when I arrived at Florence I found myself much stronger and more capable of enduring fatigue than when I left Rome. I met with a German at Florence, who voluntarily offered to show me every thing that was worth seeing in that city. I extolled his politeness, as I supposed the offer to proceed entirely from the obliging disposition of the man; but when he had taken me over the city, and I was preparing to express my gratitude in an appropriate speech, he had the meanness to ask for a remuneration. This request instantly turned to ice the warm feelings I had at first entertained for him; I knew indeed that, as he had voluntarily made the offer, and there was no previous stipulation for payment, he could not insist upon his claim; but I called to mind the passage of Hesiod which recommends us to repay services

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with an equal and even a larger measure of liberality than may be due to them; and I therefore satisfied the cravings of my mercenary guide.

I left Florence, and proceeded over the Apennines to Bologna, where, being desirous of obtaining a dispensation from the ordinance which prohibits the eating of meat during Lent, I procured a certificate of ill health from a physician, with which I was sent to the priests assembled for this purpose in the cathedral. Upon showing my certificate, I obtained a dispensation couched in these words, *Come il Signor M. Recco non può senza pericolo di santià guardare la Quaresima*, &c. 'As Mr Michael Rög cannot keep Lent without danger to his health, &c.' Having obtained this indulgence, I proceeded through Parma and Placentia to Turin, in which city I spent some time, not so much in reposing myself after my fatigues, as in gratifying my curiosity. Turin is the finest city I have ever seen. In that part of it called *città nuova*, which comprehends one half of the whole city, such is the elegant symmetry of the buildings, that they seem rather to form one immense palace than a succession of houses. The houses, indeed, are only distinguishable from each other by the inscriptions over the doors. I remained two days at Turin, and then resumed my journey; but I felt that my strength was rather impaired than recruited by the intermission of my labours; for bodily exertion is much more easily continued, than resumed after an interval of repose. In this respect a traveller resembles a torch, which will keep alight as long as it is shaken, but is with difficulty rekindled, if the motion which supports the flame is discontinued. Hence I walked at starting with the pace of a tortoise, scarcely accomplishing more than three or four miles on the first day; but by dint of continued exertion I

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gradually recovered my former agility, and travelled at my accustomed pace.

From Turin I proceeded across the Alps into Savoy, a country which abounds with towns and villages, though its general features are rugged, and its barren rocks and mountains give it a cheerless and desolate aspect. Traces of the ravages committed by the French in the late sieges were apparent in both principalities. The garrisons had been dismantled by the enemy; and I met therefore with fewer interruptions in my passage through the country than I should otherwise have done. In crossing the Alps I experienced the temperature of three different seasons in one day; summer in the plains of Piedmont, winter on the summit of the Alps, and autumn in Savoy. Travellers ascend the Alps on mules, which are hired for a moderate sum at the foot of the mountains. On the summit of the Alps is a plain, over which carriages may pass with safety. Here travellers may hire sledges, in which they may effect their descent in a few seconds; for you seem not so much to descend, as to cleave the air with the velocity of an eagle. This mode of descending the mountaineers call *se faire ramasser*.

I proceeded through Savoy and Dauphiny, and arrived at length at Lyons, where I considered myself as having reached a safe port after my fatigues and perils; for the remainder of my journey, with the exception of a few miles through Burgundy, could be accomplished without difficulty, as I had enough money left to pay for my passage by water.

I accordingly paid for my passage in a boat which was to set out from Lyons the next morning; but new disasters awaited me; for, having given an account of my protracted fever to my fellow-travellers, I was persuaded on all sides to try the effect

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of drinking, as a last, and in their opinion an effectual remedy. Unluckily, I yielded to their persuasions; I spent the whole evening in drinking at an inn, and went to bed in a state of complete intoxication. Unaccustomed to such excesses, and more than commonly susceptible of excitement from the disease under which I was labouring, the wine had such an effect upon my nerves that I awoke in the morning in a state of delirium; and when my companions of the night came to conduct me to the boat, I resisted furiously all their attempts to remove me. When they felt my pulse, or unbuttoned my shirt, I imagined that I was assailed by robbers, and called out vehemently for help. At length they left me behind at the inn, and I lost of course the money which I had paid for my passage. The next morning I recovered my senses, the fever of my brain being subdued by a day's fasting; and I set out for Paris on foot. When I arrived at this city, my landlord and other acquaintances scarcely recognised me; for my complexion had become so swarthy, that I looked like a native of India or Africa; and I had become so corpulent since I left Rome, that I appeared as if I had been leading an indolent and luxurious life, instead of having performed so long a journey on foot; so much was my health improved by continued exercise. My quartan indeed continued during the whole of this journey; but the fatigue I underwent gave me an appetite, and I had uniformly lived well upon the road. I remained a month at Paris, during which time I tried by every means in my power to get rid of my fever; but the Parisian doctors were as unsuccessful as all the others whom I had consulted, and it seemed as useless to take their draughts and juleps, as to pour water through a sieve.

I began to despair of obtaining a cure, and I determined therefore to return to Norway. My

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departure however was delayed for a few days by a dispute which arose between me and a citizen of Paris respecting a certain deposit. The matter was extremely clear, but the party to whom the deposit was intrusted raised a doubt about it, on the ground of the alteration which had taken place in the value of silver during my absence. We submitted the dispute to the arbitration of Nich. Grisius, who decided it in my favour; and as soon as this matter was settled, I took my departure for Holland. On my arrival at Amsterdam, I found part of my baggage, which I had left in the custody of my landlord, safe and untouched; he had kept it, he told me, not on my account, for he took it for granted that I was dead, but for the benefit of my heirs. I had still my quartan for a constant companion. All my acquaintances were astonished at the obstinacy of a complaint which could be subdued neither by physic nor time, nor by continued exercise and change of situation. Among them was a resident of Amsterdam named Adrian Gelmeyden, a townsman of mine, being a native of Bergen in Norway, who told me that he had a doctor lodging in his house who would cure me for nothing. But instead of consulting doctors, I repaired to a party of musicians, with whom I had been in the habit of playing before my departure for France; and being furnished with an instrument by one of them, I spent the whole day and a great part of the night in a very agreeable manner, expecting according to custom an attack of my quartan on the next day; but my quartan had fled, I suppose, to Italy, from whence it came; for I never afterwards experienced any febrile symptom, except that, on the days when I was subject to these attacks, I for some time felt a little numbness creep over my body. Thus a complaint which had baffled the resources of medicine was cured by music. It may be said perhaps, that

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the same thing happened to me which occurs to patients who get well spontaneously, and attribute their cure to the last physician who attends them, denouncing all whom they have employed during the active stage of their disorder. Thus in my case I may absurdly ascribe to the efficacy of music, what was really attributable only to the decline of the fever. Be that as it may, I got well, whether I was indebted to music or to nature for my recovery. Shortly afterwards I embarked on board a vessel for Hamburgh, from which place I proceeded on foot to Copenhagen.

Thus I was once more restored to my native country; but my income was so narrow, that I spent two years struggling with the greatest difficulties, and bitterly inveighing against the fates for not cutting short the lives of the professors whose longevity was a sore hinderance to my advancement. In the mean time I published a little work in the Danish language under the title of *An Introduction to the Law of Nature and of Nations*, according to the principles of Grotius and Puffendorf, which authors, together with Christopher Thomas, I made my constant guides in this performance. In this work the laws and constitutions of Denmark and Norway are cited, instead of the Code and Pandects; and historical examples, calculated to illustrate the ethical part of the treatise, are taken not merely from the Roman and Grecian history, but from that of northern nations. The work, however, was not generally relished, though at once perspicuous and useful, especially to the inhabitants of this kingdom, to whom nothing can be more advantageous than a knowledge of natural law; for the Danish law is so concise and circumscribed that, unless a judge be well skilled in natural law, he must necessarily find great difficulty and commit frequent errors in administering it; whereas in Germany, and other

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countries where the Roman law obtains, a judge of moderate capacity, if he rely not on his own judgment, has so vast a field before him in the volumes of the civilians, where he will find parallel cases adjudged upon sound principles, that he can scarcely fail of coming to a just decision. In this country there is much greater difficulty in administering the law, because it is necessary to frame five hundred imaginary cases out of one case upon which the decision must be founded; a point upon which I could throw some light, if it were my object to write a treatise upon the Danish law.

But, to return from this digression: such was the fate of my Introduction, that although a thousand copies were printed, scarcely three hundred were sold in the space of ten or twelve years; the rest either fell into the hands of confectioners, or made a banquet for moths and worms, greatly to the dissatisfaction of the bookseller at whose cost the edition was published. I may appear perhaps to censure my countrymen too severely for the little encouragement they extend to literature. This is however far from my intention; I do not mean to reproach them, but to admonish them against complaining of the indolence of literary men, since their own neglect of literature is the cause why so little is written, and why so many manuscripts are kept locked up in chests, or serve to envelope red herrings and cheesecakes. Our nobility cultivate foreign languages with such ardour, that they prefer reading French and English books, in order to improve themselves at the same time in the languages of which they are so much enamoured; and the reading of the common people is so exclusively confined to books of devotion that they neglect all other productions. Hence it is that we have so many *Chains of Prayers, Kernels of Piety, Ladders of Heaven, Squeezers of Tears, Gardens of*

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Paradise, *Spiritual Meditations*, and five hundred works of that description, which are written by needy scribblers for bread, and published again and again, with some trifling alteration of title or materials, as new productions.

I passed two years in anxious expectation of some favourable change in my circumstances, when the professorship of metaphysics became vacant, and I obtained the appointment. The salary annexed to this professorship was small, but it supplied in some measure my immediate necessities. Those who knew my character and literary taste, predicted the downfal of metaphysics as soon as I was appointed; and not without reason; for I candidly confess that I paid little regard to the beaten track pursued by my predecessor, and that this science was not likely to flourish much under my auspices. I had the prudence however to dissemble my opinions, and I even pronounced an oration in praise of metaphysics; but it was such an oration as gave little satisfaction to the philosophers of the old school, who believed that I was celebrating the obsequies of the science, instead of pronouncing a panegyric upon it.

Many changes took place shortly after in the university, in consequence of the death of some members, and the promotion of others to ecclesiastical benefices and bishoprics. I was appointed to the situation of consistorial assessor, a place of dignity and profit to which my standing in the university entitled me.

Being thus freed from the domestic anxieties with which I had been all my life contending, I began to think of recruiting my strength, which was impaired by long sickness, harassing journies, and constant solicitude, and of passing the remainder of my days in peace and tranquillity. But my fate ruled it otherwise, for one of my colleagues raised

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a dispute with me on the question of seniority, and of a certain part of my salary, which by the statutes of the university I received on the ground of seniority. This question was brought before the senate; and after arguments had been heard on both sides, it was adjudged in my favour.

I had no sooner overcome this difficulty, than a new adversary sprung up, and I was once more obliged to take the field. A new historian had appeared among us, who had lately written an epitome of the Danish history in the German language. In the preface to this work he had taken occasion to make an acrimonious attack upon our historians, as well ancient as modern, imputing negligence to the former, and denouncing the latter as triflers and plagiarists. I was classed among the Danish historians, certainly without meriting that distinction, for I had only written a compendium of universal history for the use of students; but I came in for my share of abuse.

I was charged with plagiarism for having copied Puffendorf, as the writer alleged, in those chapters which related to northern history. At first I treated this criticism with great indifference, not thinking it worth while to engage in a controversy on so trifling a matter. I was dragged against my will into the company of Danish historians, since I had not written a Danish history, but an abridgement of universal history, and I was, besides, very young and inexperienced when I attempted that work. I remained silent therefore for a long time; but at last, yielding to the importunity of my friends, who assured me that my silence would be attributed either to indolence or cowardice, I published a pamphlet under the title of 'A fifth Dissertation on the Danish Historians, which *Paul Ryter* will publicly maintain in the Royal College against the renowned CHRISTIAN ANDREWS.'

This dissertation was received with general approbation. The only person whom it displeased was *Paul Ryter*; but the wrath of an old sexagenarian was soon appeased, when he reflected that this was an apology for his country, undertaken from fair and honourable motives. The dissertation is confined to an examination of the author's preface; for I felt no inclination to go into the work itself, and expose its chronological and historical errors. This would have savoured too much of scholastic disputation; for it is well known that no author can be mentioned whom the schoolmen are not ready to convict of error in almost every page of his writings.

Not long after, another work was published by the same author, to prove that marriages between relations were not prohibited by natural or divine law. This reopened the wounds which were not yet healed. Lawyers and divines were all up in arms against the writer, and I was solicited by my friends to break a lance upon the head of my antagonist. No great persuasion was necessary to revive my controversial ardour; and I published a *legal dissertation* by *Olaus Petrus* of Norway, showing that marriages between persons lineally related to each other are prohibited by natural law. *I contented* myself with examining, in a few pages, the principal objections of the author to the arguments which *jurists* had founded upon the immorality, indecency, and confusion, which would result from the non-prohibition of such marriages, leaving other branches of the *question* to be discussed by divines, to whose *province the* greater part of the subject properly *belonged*. On this account my dissertation *appeared deficient* to many who did not *perceive* my *object*; *for I* purposely avoided *entering* into the *theological* part of the discussion; and having *discharged* a little small shot at my

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Not long after, another work was published by the same author, to prove that marriages between relations were not prohibited by natural or divine law. This book reopened the wounds which were not yet healed. Lawyers and divines were all up in arms against the writer, and I was solicited by my friends to break another lance upon the head of my antagonist. No great persuasion was necessary to revive my controversial ardour; and I published a legal dissertation by *Olaus Petrus* of Norway, showing that marriages between persons lineally related to each other are prohibited by natural law. I contented myself with examining, in a few pages, the principal objections of the author to the arguments which jurists had founded upon the immorality, indecency, and confusion, which would result from the non-prohibition of such marriages, leaving other branches of the question to be discussed by divines, to whose province the greater part of the subject properly belonged. On this account my dissertation appeared deficient to many who did not perceive my object; for I purposely avoided entering into the theological part of the discussion; and having discharged a little small shot at my

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adversary, I made way for the divines, whose duty it was to come to close quarters with him, and, if they could, to take his arguments by the horns. Many again were of opinion that in both my dissertations I had indulged too freely in ridicule and sarcasm; and perhaps they were right, for I confess that my disposition generally leads me to combine truth with pleasantry, and, if I can, to make a joke the vehicle of instruction. I abstained, however, from coarse invective, and carefully avoided all personal attacks upon the author; for the book, and not the writer, was the object of my hostility. I know not what feeling the author now entertains towards me on account of these two dissertations; I leave it to the republic of letters, I leave it to himself, to decide whether I did not defend myself with great moderation against a very severe attack. I was treated on this occasion like those enthusiasts who, while they are endeavouring to bring others into the right path, fall themselves into the very errors they denounce; for, in replying to a satirical production, I became a satirist myself, and exposed myself to more animadversion than the party who originally assailed me.

Hitherto I had devoted myself entirely to jurisprudence, history, and languages, neglecting all other studies, and especially the study of poetry, which I held in such contempt that I could not hear the finest passages of the best writers without impatience. I had cultivated Latin poetry indeed, as a sort of necessary evil; and I had perused the Latin poets, not because I took any pleasure in reading them, but with a view of improving myself in the language; as sick men swallow bitter draughts, not because they are grateful to the palate, but because they are recommended by their physicians.

But our intellectual tastes are so constituted, that what we dislike at one time, we relish highly at

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another; and a change of studies is as grateful to the mind, as a variety of grain is favourable to the fertility of the earth. I had now reached my thirtieth year without ever having attempted to write a poem, though in the city where I resided poets swarmed every year like flies in the month of September. At length, my ears being assailed with poems on all sides, I exclaimed

> Semper ego auditor tantum? Nunquamne reponam
> Vexatus toties?

and I determined to try my hand at an imitation of the sixth satire of Juvenal. My facility was greater than I had anticipated. I finished my satire in a few days, and showed it to a friend, who was of opinion that it was full of the true spirit and genius of poetry, though deficient in point of mechanical accuracy. My friend gave me some instruction in the rules of prosody observed in Danish poetry, by which I afterwards profited; and having made a few more trifling but not unsuccessful attempts, I sat down, full of confidence in my own powers, to compose that celebrated heroi-comic poem which is now read and committed to memory even by Swedes and Germans, whom its popularity has induced to learn the Danish language.

This poem was differently received according to the different character and disposition of its readers. Some were secretly displeased with it; others openly avowed the indignation it excited; some imagined themselves to be attacked under fictitious names; and others, feeling equally guilty, and expecting similar treatment, joined in the abuse of the author. Some, whose reading had never extended beyond epithalamiums, epitaphs, and panegyrics, were alarmed at the novelty of this production, and condemned the audacity of the satirist; others,

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conceiving their enemies to be the objects of attack, read the poem with laughter and delight, and took every opportunity of repeating what they considered the severest passages in the hearing of those to whom the satire was supposed to apply. The vulgar, whose opinions are commonly superficial, deemed it the work of an idler; and some literary characters, in their excessive anxiety to show their penetration, were equally at fault with the vulgar.

There were some, however, who formed a more favourable judgment of the merits of this production, and who applauded me, when my name became known, for my attempt to combine satire with pleasantry, and to temper the severity of reproof by the graces of poetical embellishment. In their opinion my poem was so far from meriting the light estimation in which some critics held it, that they considered its appearance an era in the literature of the country. The Danes, said they, have at length a poem in their native language, which they need not be ashamed to show to Frenchmen and to Englishmen. By their persuasions I was induced to continue this poem till it reached four books, and formed a considerable volume, of which not less than three editions were sold in the space of a year and a half; a degree of success which had never before attended any book written in the Danish language. The last of these editions was carefully revised, and also embellished with engravings. I heard afterwards that my poems had a considerable sale in Sweden and Germany; and it gave me no small satisfaction to find that productions which had been so popular in my own country, had met with an equally favourable reception abroad. But why do I boast of all this success, as if I wished to avail myself of the privilege which poets have to commit extravagancies? I do not, however, proclaim my own opinion of my poetical merits, but

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the opinion which the world has been pleased to pronounce upon them; and whether the world be right or wrong, I am not the less satisfied with its decision. I begin, indeed, to think that there must be some merit in productions which so many men of sound judgment in different countries have concurred in approving, and that there cannot be much to blame in what men of the highest literary and moral character have read with pleasure. I pass over all the furious criticisms, all the virulent accusations, with which I was assailed; suffice it to say, that when the poem was examined before the supreme council, his most gracious majesty's learned counsellors pronounced it a pleasant and unobjectionable production.

When the ferment produced by the *History of Peter Paarsius* (for so the poem was called) had in some degree subsided, I began to think of writing a few more satires, and soon after published five, the first of which is levelled generally against the folly of mankind, and is called *Democritus and Heraclitus*. The second is an apology for the singer Tigellius, in which it is shown that the inconsistency for which Horace ridicules Tigellius, is a folly from which neither Horace himself, nor the greater part of mankind, are exempt. The third satire contains a criticism on the history of Peter Paarsius. In the fourth satire, which is written in imitation of the sixth of Juvenal, the poet dissuades a friend, advanced in years, from marrying. The fifth is a defence of the fair sex, in which it is shown that women are excluded from holding public offices, not by the laws of nature, but by prescription and arbitrary institutions. To each satire was prefixed an apologetic preface, in which objections were met, and the design of the poet distinctly laid open. These precautions, in some degree, disarmed resentment; but there were many who still

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continued to regard me with aversion, and to think that every thing was to be dreaded from a poet who attacked with such unsparing severity the vices and follies of mankind. I remember being once asked by a man, who was himself by no means illiterate, to write some verses against a brother of his, who was an exceedingly profligate character. I replied in the words of Pliny, that I attacked vices, not men; and that if I ever departed from this rule, and directed my satire against individuals, I should make a point of beginning with myself. By such answers and candid avowals as these, I endeavoured to remove the unfavourable impressions which were entertained of me; but I was not always successful, for many were firmly persuaded that there was a latent venom in every thing I said and did, and that all my professions of liberality were feigned and extorted from me by fear. If I expressed an opinion about the weather, or any other ordinary topic, they would be sure to detect a double meaning in it, a literal and a mystical one. Nothing could be more erroneous than this opinion of the duplicity of my character; for I am naturally of a candid, open disposition. I am irritable and passionate; but, whether angry or pleased, I am incapable of disguising my feelings, and my countenance is sure to betray them; in fact, I should be more justly blamed for the indiscreet frankness, than for the closeness and duplicity, of my character.

My satires, and the oration I delivered some years before in praise of metaphysics, had given rise to a pretty general persuasion, that I should never excel in panegyric. Accordingly, when I was made secretary of the university, and it became my duty to write a program, in which, according to custom, the candidates for the degrees of bachelors and masters were to be eulogized, my friends predicted

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that I should fail; and their prediction was verified, for the program was suppressed, and many malicious reports were circulated against me on account of certain passages contained in it. The proscription of this program, however, enhanced its price, as is commonly the case; for suppression is the food of reputation, and it is that species of food on which it grows fastest.

Weary of continuing pursuits from which I derived but little profit, and which exposed me to so much calumny and misconstruction, I abandoned poetry, and betook myself to my former studies, determining to complete a work which I had begun some years before, comprehending a succinct account of the civil and ecclesiastical state of both kingdoms. But while I was engaged in this work, some of my friends, among whom were many persons of the first distinction, who wished to introduce into this country regular plays, like those of other nations, written in the Danish language, and who, judging from the success of my poem and satires, thought me capable of succeeding equally in the drama,—solicited me to turn my attention to this branch of writing. It was not easy for me to resist these solicitations on the one hand; but on the other I was afraid of adding fuel to the malice of my enemies, from which I had already suffered enough to convince me how dangerous an enterprise it is to make war against the follies and prejudices of mankind. I was at length, however, prevailed upon to undertake the task, and I wrote those plays which have since been collected into several volumes, and which are now in every body's hands. I made it my chief object in these comedies to attack follies and vices which had escaped other dramatic writers, and which, in some instances, were peculiar to the people of this country. I at first contented myself with reading these plays to my friends, and was for

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some time in doubt whether I should suffer them to be exhibited on the stage; but I yielded to continued importunity, and gave the first five to the company of comedians.

The first of these plays, entitled *Den Politiske Kandestober*, or *The Political Tinman*, was performed with extraordinary success in the year 1722. Such was the crowd of spectators, and so great was the general eagerness to witness this performance, that the entrances to the theatre were thronged with persons who were unable to advance or recede. The plot of this comedy gave offence to some persons who did not properly appreciate the object of the dramatist, and who conceived that the consuls and senators of the city were ridiculed in it; whereas the piece was eminently calculated to uphold the true dignity of the magistracy. The play was intended to satirize those ale-house politicians who take upon themselves to attack princes, magistrates, and generals over their cups, and who condemn public measures, and military movements, as if they were themselves statesmen and generals, instead of cobblers and haberdashers. The hero of the piece is a tinman, whom certain senators, pretending to be delegated by the senate, invest with the dignity of consul. The tinman makes himself ridiculous by attempting to discharge public duties to which he is unequal, finds there is more difficulty than he had imagined in governing a nation, and learns the wisdom of abandoning politics and attending to the manufacture of saucepans. The lesson conveyed by this piece is extremely salutary, especially in free states, where the license of speech in which the common people indulge cannot be restrained by laws or penal enactments.

The second piece was called *Den Vögelsindede*, or *Lucretia*, in which the singular capriciousness and inconsistency of character which may be observed

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in some women are held up to ridicule. I am not aware that this subject has ever been touched upon by any other dramatic writer. Lucretia is a whimsical, inconstant, capricious woman, whose character was so inimitably represented by the wife of Montacute the French actor, that she was acknowledged by all who witnessed this performance to be the best actress on our stage. This play was coldly received by many who thought some of the scenes too grave and serious; there were a few persons, however, on whose judgment I place a greater reliance than on that of the multitude, who thought it not inferior to any of my comedies.

The title of my third play is *Hans Frandsen*, or John of France, the satire of which is directed against the rage which prevails among our youth for visiting foreign countries, where for the most part they dissipate their fortunes, and whence they return home in a beggarly condition, with no other acquisitions than depraved morals, and a contempt for their own country. The pleasantries and sarcasms to which this subject gives occasion, suited all tastes, and the comedy was universally applauded.

The plot of my fourth play, *Jeppe van Bierged*, or the Danish Menalcas, is borrowed from Bidermann, and I have no claim therefore to the merit of its invention; but it is only the plot for which I am indebted to that writer. The first representation of this piece was defective, on account of some disputes among the performers; the second had better success, and was greatly aided by the talents of one of the company, who imitated with singular felicity the language, gestures, and general deportment, of a peasant of Zeeland.

My fifth comedy, called *The Babbling Barber*, was at first so ill received by the majority of the audience, that many of them left the theatre in

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disgust before the end of the performance. I had calculated upon a very different reception of this piece, for I have always considered it one of my happiest productions. Finding that the cause of the general dissatisfaction was the frequent repetition of the same stories by the hero of the play, I wrote an apologetic prologue, in which I explained to the audience, that in these frequent repetitions consisted the very essence of the satire, to which, in fact, nothing was wanting but that the loquacity of the barber should be employed on still fewer topics, and that instead of three stories, with which he is constantly assassinating his hearers, it would have been better if the poet had limited him to one. This explanation produced such a change of the public opinion, that the very persons who were at first most violently opposed to it, declared it to be one of the best comedies I had written.

The Eleventh Day of June was acted on the day which gives the title to the play, and attracted almost the whole city to the theatre. The piece turns upon the stratagems employed by a debtor against the son of a notorious money-lender, who had been sent by his father to get the interest due upon certain bonds. The servant of the debtor, finding that the usurer's son does not inherit his father's shrewdness, palms himself upon him as a cousin, and cheats him with such success, that he not only contrives to cancel his master's bonds, but sends Mopsus back to his father completely stripped of his plumage. This play is highly seasoned with that sort of coarse humour which is suited to the taste of the vulgar; for I have sometimes found it necessary to lay baits of this kind, which are sure to catch the public approbation, instead of consulting my own taste.

My seventh play, *The Lady in Child-bed*, is an attempt to show, in a series of humorous scenes, that

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the annoyances to which women in that situation are commonly exposed, are more intolerable than the pains of labour. The heroine is assailed by a succession of visitations from her female relatives and friends, who assassinate her with their ill-timed congratulations, and their insufferably tender attentions. As the piece exposed some of the foibles of the fair sex, it gave offence in some quarters; but by judicious critics it has always been considered a comedy of the best class.

The Empiric is a short piece in one act, in which the folly of those who addict themselves to the study of alchemy is exposed. A rogue, who pretends that he has discovered the art of making gold, gains the confidence of a nobleman, who at first takes him for another Archimedes, but has good reason at last to be convinced of his mistake. The satire of the piece was not directed solely against alchemists; for, the rumour of the empiric's being able to make gold of dirt having been spread through the city, persons of all classes, and among them those who had once treated him with the greatest contempt, are represented as approaching him with profound respect and servile adulation. The empiric receives them with infinite dignity, and is in the act of reproaching them with their levity and want of faith, when the cheat is discovered, and the impostor becomes the object of general vituperation and derision. This subject was so well suited to the public taste, that the only fault found with the play was its brevity.

My ninth piece, *Juulestue*, was received with equal applause. It is a mere trifle, but so comic a trifle, that when it was first represented, many parts of it were inaudible from the excessive laughter of the audience. The actors themselves could not refrain from laughing, so that the play was

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sometimes literally at a stand, and it was doubtful whether it could be continued.

My tenth piece, *Mascarade*, was of a similar character, and it suited equally the tastes of the lower orders, who delight in showy spectacles, and of the higher classes, who frequent theatres to gratify their ears. A love story furnishes the plot of this play, which is abundantly seasoned with satirical humour; it was three times repeated by order of the authorities—an honour never before conferred upon any comedy represented on our stage.

My eleventh play, *The Boasting Soldier*, was not unfavourably received, though constructed upon an ancient model, the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus. I perceived, however, the necessity of curtailing some of the soliloquies in this piece, which, though they may be read with pleasure on account of the jokes interspersed in them, are too long to be recited on the stage.

My twelfth play, *Ulysses*, was received with much greater applause. It ridicules those monstrous productions in the shape of comedies which used formerly to be exhibited by our strolling players. The time of the action comprehends forty years, and the scene is perpetually changed. The principal personages speak a bombastic, inflated language, to distinguish themselves from the vulgar; the trumpet sounds whenever the emperor enters on the stage; and the characters who appear as boys in one scene, come forward with grey beards in the next. Add to this frequent anachronisms, names and countries barbarously confused, and all those absurdities with which the comedies of the strolling players abound; absurdities, which are exposed in this play with such dexterity by Harlequin, the servant of Ulysses, that even the common people, who generally yawn over every thing moral or

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critical introduced in a drama, were as much pleased with it as more discriminating judges.

My thirteenth play is entitled *Kildo-Keise, or a Journey to the Sacred Spring.* It ridicules the believers in the miraculous virtue of a certain spring at no great distance from the city, who flock thither in crowds at a certain period of the year, namely, the fast of St John the Baptist.

Melampus, my fourteenth play, is a tragi-comedy. The hero of the play is a lap-dog, of which two sisters are so passionately fond, that a quarrel arises from this cause between their husbands. The quarrel is happily settled by the arrival of a brother of the two sisters, who slays Melampus, the lap-dog in question, and reconciles the contending parties by thus removing the cause of their dissention. This ludicrous subject is treated in a lofty strain of poetry, and its novelty made it a great favourite with the public. The design of the play is twofold; first, to ridicule tragedies written in a turgid and bombastic style; and secondly, to censure the conduct of that class of females who, to save a lap-dog, would cheerfully sacrifice a man.

My fifteenth play is entitled *The Brothers at Cross-purposes.* The principal characters are two brothers, one of whom is a bigot, and the other a sceptic. A friend undertakes to correct their respective errors; and the consequence of his friendly exertions is, that he makes a sceptic of the bigot, and a bigot of the sceptic. This play therefore shows the facility with which we rush from one error into another of an opposite character, and the care which should be taken, in all attempts at reform, not to correct one mischief at the expense of another.

These fifteen plays were printed in three separate volumes, the first of which was reprinted three times in the space of two years. Those which have

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not been printed, but which have been acted with applause at our theatre, are, 1. *The Stratagems of Henry*—Henry is the name of the valet in all my comedies—2. *Henry and Petronilla;* 3. *The Countryman in the Character of Count Palatine;* 4. *Always busy and doing nothing;* and lastly, 5. *The Treacherous Step-father.*

It afforded matter of astonishment to many persons, that I should have been able in so short a time to produce so many comedies, most of which were levelled against vices and follies which had not been noticed by other comic writers; and there were not wanting those who ascribed the facility of production to the intrinsic mediocrity of these dramatic compositions. To reply to such insinuations would be only to proclaim my own praise; and I shall therefore content myself with stating the fact, that my comedies were played on alternate nights with Moliere's, with equal success, although the French pieces had the advantage of being represented under the superintendence of the celebrated French comedian Montacute. Besides, it must be considered that there is perhaps no country in the world in which talent of native growth is so much undervalued as our own. Persons who have any pretension to refinement, and especially the women, who give the tone to fashion and taste, despise every thing that is not French. If my plays, therefore, have met with so favourable a reception, if they have been so frequently represented, and have proved so large a source of profit to the comedians, their success cannot be attributed to the charm of novelty, or to the superior advantages under which they were performed. Many attempts, both open and secret, have been made to destroy or undermine the reputation which I have acquired by my dramatic writings; but all these attempts have failed, and my comedies have continued in full possession

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of the public favour, equally approved by all classes from the lowest to the most exalted.

One of my most distinguished friends has felt some surprise, and has expressed his regret, as well on my own account as for the sake of the public, that I should have discontinued writing for the stage. Why he should regret on public grounds the discontinuance of Danish theatricals, I can readily conceive, since all who have the interests of their country at heart, must have been pleased at performances not less honourable than useful; honourable, because they taught other nations to respect the literary reputation of Denmark; and useful, because they exhibited a faithful picture of human life—because they inculcated moral instruction, which the people would never find in the crude plays of the strollers to which they had been accustomed—and finally, because they drove from our shores troops of foreigners, whose performances not only cheated us of our money and our time, but were calculated to corrupt the national manners, to enervate the national taste, and, above all, to debase the morality of the country. I remember an exclamation made by a friend of mine, when he overheard a waiting-maid discussing with considerable acuteness some absurdities of conduct at that time satirized on the Danish stage. 'Happy,' said he, 'is the city, where even waiting-maids talk like philosophers!' There was another advantage resulting from these performances—that they tended to refine the Danish language, into which considerable confusion has crept in consequence of the little attention that has been paid to it. For all these reasons I am not surprised that my friend should have regretted the discontinuance of Danish performances on public grounds; but why he should have regretted it on my account, I am at a loss to conceive; since it has exempted me from all the ill-will, anxiety,

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and labour, to which I was subjected when I wrote for the theatre. I injured my health by writing so assiduously, and I gained little or nothing by my labour; whereas in France or England two or three thousand dollars are often made by a single successful play. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that I ought to be congratulated upon having abandoned so invidious and unprofitable an employment.

Finding my health impaired by so much uninterrmitted labour, I determined to go to the baths of Aix-la-Chapelle; and having procured a royal passport, I set out on my journey in the beginning of the month of June 1725.

I expected to derive as much benefit from exercise, as from the baths; but I was disappointed in this expectation, for I found that the degree of bodily exertion which in my younger days, when I lived somewhat more freely, was extremely beneficial, now that I was more advanced in years, and observed the most rigid temperance in my mode of living, was unfavourable to my health. The weather was so inclement this year, that, although the summer was far advanced, rains fell incessantly, accompanied with severe cold. The vessel in which I crossed the straits of the Baltic encountered a heavy storm, from which she narrowly escaped. I arrived safely however at Hadersley, the inhabitants of which place appeared to me to be particularly civil and attentive to strangers. Very different are the character and conduct of the people of Flensburg, who, of all the inhabitants of the duchy of Sleswic, have the reputation of being most pertinaciously addicted to the making of money, and most rigidly tenacious of what they have acquired. It is not surprising, therefore, that so many opulent citizens are to be found here, especially as they have obtained various immunities which the subjects of other kingdoms and duchies do not enjoy. The inn at which I put

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up at Flensburg was execrable; it was a large house with a vast number of rooms in it, but so dirty, that at every step you took something filthy was sure to offend the sense of sight or smelling. The stench, in fact, was so abominable that I was obliged to burn frankincense in my apartment. The people I met at dinner were fit inmates of such a place of entertainment. I was amused and disgusted by two of them, one of whom had lost by I know not what accident, the most prominent feature in his countenance, and the other had an impediment in his speech. The man with the impediment, like all stammerers, talked or attempted to talk incessantly; and the man without a proboscis, not choosing to be stammered at for nothing, snuffled at his adversary like a hissing snake. The colloquy, if an interchange of stammering and snuffling can be so called, was at once comic and disgusting. Besides this, half a dozen cats mewing, and as many curs yelping, round the dinner table, completed the combination of discords. I was glad to make my escape from this scene; and as I was obliged to remain two days in the town, I went to another inn, where having detailed to the landlord the annoyances I had met with, I requested him to furnish me with accommodation in his house. The landlord, being afraid of incurring the resentment of the other innkeeper, said he could not accommodate me; and I was obliged to return to my den. I determined, however, not to encounter a second time my friends at the public table; and therefore, affecting indisposition, I desired my dinner and supper to be brought to me in my own apartment. From Flensburg I proceeded to Hamburgh, where I remained a few days. There are many things worthy of notice in this superb and wealthy town, and there are also many distinguished literary men who reside here. At this time I saw no one but the celebrated Fleisher,

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professor at Altona, whose friendship I have long enjoyed.

There are three ways in which travellers may go to Amsterdam; either through Osnaburg in the ordinary vehicle called, on account of its slowness, *Ochsenpost*, or in the boats which sail at stated periods, or through Bremen and Oldenburg. I chose the last way, which is generally recommended as the best. After a journey of two days, I arrived at Bremen with dripping garments, and limbs almost stiffened with cold; for we had had such violent storms on the road, that we were apprehensive of having the carriage overturned, the wind having in many places torn up the trees by the roots. Wherever the carriage stopped, we were obliged to have fires lighted at the inn, though it was now the middle of the month of June. The inhabitants of the city of Bremen lead a dull, austere life; there are no plays, no public spectacles here, except such as are exhibited by strolling companies at stated periods of the year. The people of Bremen seem to have no desire either to see spectacles, or to be seen themselves; and whoever wishes to lead a tranquil, retired life, cannot fix upon a place better suited to his views than this city. The public tranquillity has been rarely disturbed at Bremen by any popular commotions, and private property is as rarely invaded; for any instance of theft or robbery is considered a remarkable event. At the time I was here, a man had just been detected in the act of thieving; and the sensation excited by this unusual occurrence was so great, that almost the whole city came out to view the culprit, who was regarded as a sort of monster. The municipal institutions of Bremen resemble very nearly those of Bergen in Norway. Both cities have their aldermen, their acteins, their schötings; there are the same magistrates, the same senates, the same ceremonies, in both; so that our Hanseatic

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institutions seem to have been expressly formed upon the model of those of Bremen.

The journey to Amsterdam, through the duchy of Bremen and the county palatine of Oldenburg, is sufficiently commodious and cheap, if you can find travellers to share the expense; but as I had no companion, and there are no public stages, I repented of having chosen this route, since I was obliged to incur the whole expense of hiring the vehicles called *Ordinantzia Wagens*. I spent several days very pleasantly at Oldenburg, being most hospitably received by the prefect of the county, Mr Slehest, a man entirely free from all the pride of rank, who is distinguished from the vulgar only by his virtues, his talents, and his urbanity. His house was so much frequented by literary men, that it had rather the appearance of a college or academy than of a private mansion. His dinners and suppers were seasoned with intellectual conversation; and though more splendid entertainments might have been given elsewhere, it was impossible at any table to meet with more cordiality, good-humour, and freedom from all reserve. It may easily be supposed, therefore, that I did not leave Oldenburg without regret.

The journey through East Frieseland to Neuburg is as disagreeable as it is expensive; but from this place you may proceed, in boats drawn by horses, at a very trifling expense, especially if you go on with them by night, which most of the passengers do, as well for the sake of expedition as to avoid the extortion of Dutch innkeepers, who fleece travellers most unmercifully. The inns throughout Holland are as incommodious as they are expensive. Superb cities and splendid edifices abound in this country, and the most scrupulous cleanliness is observed even in the humblest private dwelling-houses. But though these objects gratify the eyes of travellers,

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a great deal of inconvenience and discomfort must be suffered as the price of this gratification; for the innkeepers, who generally make money by a variety of pursuits, do not attend to the comforts of their guests like the innkeepers of France or Italy. The chambers at Dutch inns are wretched, unhealthy apartments, furnished with a number of beds, to which you mount by ladders, and where you sleep in company with thieves and vagabonds—or rather are compelled, if you have any regard for the integrity of your windpipe, to pass a night of sleepless vigilance. Even the cleanliness of which the Dutch boast so much, may be ranked among the national nuisances; for if you happen to spit, or let fall a drop of water on the floor of a Dutch inn, you are liable to be assailed by the landlord as if you had polluted a church.

The Dutch are cleanly in detail, but dirty in the gross; they wash their streets, but not their hands. You may see a party at dinner all dipping their hands into the same dish; a mode of feeding which must be admitted to be sufficiently disgusting, especially if a sailor with his hands covered with tar should happen, as is frequently the case, to form one of the group. There are few people less to be envied; for, with immense wealth, they live like paupers. I have often recalled to mind the words of the poet, in surveying their lofty palaces, to which it seldom happens that any grounds or gardens are attached:

> Esse aliquid quocunque loco, quocunque recessu,
> Unius sese dominum fecisse lacertæ.

I was once invited to dinner by a respectable merchant, and the whole dinner consisted of a single dish of fish. He frequently invited me afterwards, but I could not be prevailed upon to repeat the experiment.

Such are the inconveniences which travellers have to encounter in Holland; but they are atoned for by

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many excellent institutions and salutary laws, which attract people of all nations to this country, and which in fact render Holland the common country of the whole civilized world. The Dutch are also honourable in their dealings, frank and sincere in their manners. Most of my friends at Amsterdam who were acquainted with my weak state of health, dissuaded me from continuing the journey I had undertaken; and though I was at first disposed to disregard this advice, I at length yielded to it. Having accomplished, however, the most fatiguing part of the journey, I thought it would not be expedient to return to Norway in the autumn; and I resolved, therefore, to pass the winter at Brussels and Paris. Accordingly I took my passage in the boat which goes from Amsterdam to Rotterdam. This conveyance appears to be very convenient, especially to those who take their baggage with them; but I advise all men to avoid going by this boat, unless they take the precaution of securing to themselves the captain's cabin. I neglected this precaution; and the consequence was, that I was obliged to pass a sleepless night in the common cabin, which was filled with sailors just arrived from India, who were going to Zeeland. The vulgar conversation, coarse jokes, and obscene songs, of these men, together with the clouds of smoke with which they filled the room, so that at mid-day the darkness was complete, all sorely annoyed me; but I bore every thing with patience, until I heard them enter into a compact that no one should sleep for a moment during the whole night. I had some hope that this agreement, made over their cups, would be forgotten when they had finished their debauch; but as they continued drinking brandy all night, the compact was steadily observed; and if I nodded for an instant, I was immediately jogged by one of the party, and in this way prevented from taking

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the slightest repose. At length I arrived, ill at ease both in body and mind, at Rotterdam, where, in relating what had happened to a French colonel named *Caneau*, I learned for my consolation from that officer, who had recently returned from Spain, that he had passed just such a night on board the same boat. This colonel afterwards accompanied me to Antwerp; he was an obliging, thoroughly accomplished gentleman, and showed great readiness on all occasions to render me every service in his power. We were twenty-four hours in going from Rotterdam to Antwerp, though the passage does not occupy more than half that time if the wind is favourable. The appearance of Antwerp presents a striking contrast to that of Rotterdam. In Rotterdam, which ranks as the second commercial city in Holland, all is noise, bustle, and activity; in Antwerp a profound tranquillity reigns throughout the city. Rotterdam is distinguished for its wealth, Antwerp for its poverty; Rotterdam for the coarse vulgarity which characterises its citizens, Antwerp for the cultivated and polished manners of its inhabitants. In Rotterdam various religions and different modes of worship prevail; in Antwerp the Catholic religion obtains to the exclusion of all others; for the people of Flanders and Brabant, accustomed to live under the Spanish government, are held to be more orthodox than the Italians themselves. The cities, the suburbs, the country, and even the highways, are so crowded with sanctuaries and divinities, that in the Low Countries it is easier to find a god than a man. From Antwerp I proceeded to Mechlin, where I was obliged to stop some time for a conveyance. While I was sauntering about the town, I met a friar of the order of St Francis, who took me into their monastery. There is a fine garden belonging to the monastery, every nook and corner of which is furnished

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with the image of some saint, a species of embellishment which does not exactly suit the taste of a heretic. In the church there was a series of pictures illustrating the different passages in the life of St Francis. My guide gave me an amusing specimen of his ignorance in the following explanation of one of these pictures. 'Here,' said he, 'you see the penitent St Francis, who, after abjuring the heresy of the Calvinists with which he was infected, throws himself upon his knees before his father, by whom he is severely reprimanded.'

I spent some days at Brussels, and then proceeded to Paris, the aspect of which city was unusually melancholy in consequence of the scarcity of provisions, the price of the pound loaf of bread being at that time ten sous. The people, driven to desperation, had assembled in mobs, and committed many excesses, which were only repressed by the capital punishment of two citizens. About the same time the miraculous cure of a woman who had long laboured under a bloody flux, was the subject of much conversation, and the history of the miracle was printed and circulated among the people; but the lower classes of the community, anxious only to appease their hunger, cared little about miracles at this juncture; and I heard one of them say, 'There is a better crop of miracles than of corn this year; and while the saints are working miracles, we are dying of hunger!' The clergy, however, insisted vehemently upon the importance of the miracle, and declared that it was alone sufficient to convert all who had not yet embraced the Roman Catholic faith. The whole neighbourhood in which the woman lived testified to the fact of her having laboured under a bloody flux for many years; and her sudden cure was effected in the presence of multitudes of people; for while she was following the host, leaning upon her crutch, a river of blood

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flowed from her person; but when she returned from church, that person was as sound as a roach, and as dry as a bird's nest. What impartial individual therefore could doubt the miracle? In fact, none but Jesuits and physicians attempted to depreciate it. The doubt suggested by the Jesuits was extremely frivolous; for they relied upon the impossibility of God suffering a miracle to be performed, since the priest who carried the host was a Jansenist. The arguments of the physicians were more plausible, since they believed that the effect supposed to be miraculous might have been brought about by the mere force of imagination; and they cited a great number of cases in support of this hypothesis. But I must quit this subject, and return to my own story.

I hired an apartment in the Rue St Jaques, not far from the gardens of the Luxembourg; a quarter of the city which I preferred to all others on account of the salubrity of the air. There was one inconvenience, however, attending a residence in this part of Paris, which was, that it was more than any other infested by beggars. It was ludicrous to see fashionably dressed men, reeking with essences and perfumes, and carrying a bushel of flour on their wigs, begging piteously for a morsel of bread, and declaring with uplifted hands that they were dying of hunger. I once observed a well-dressed man ask alms from a female passenger elegantly attired in a silk dress. The application was unsuccessful; and no wonder—for I observed the same female solicit relief from another passenger. The female shortly after fell down in a fainting fit, and was carried home to her lodging, which proved to be a wretched hovel; and I ascertained that the unfortunate woman had been reduced to such distress, that she could scarcely obtain sufficient food to support life. I mention these circumstances because they

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tend to illustrate the character of the French people, since even their beggars affect an ambitious style of dress, and are in fact only distinguishable from men of rank and opulence by the air of misery and emaciation which poverty has imprinted on their features. At Paris it is scarcely possible to distinguish an actor or a public dancer from a minister of state; a cobbler or fuller might well pass for a senator, and a cook's wife for one of her majesty's principal maids of honour. The rage for dress which prevails in Paris was very unfavourable to my pretensions in point of gentility; for my garments, though sufficiently respectable, were by no means good enough to entitle me to rank among the class of people whom the Parisians style *honnêtes gens*. Whatever mortifications however I might suffer on this account, I was not at all inclined to comply with the fashion; for I had come to Paris, not to spend my money in dress or luxury, not, as the tradesmen of the faubourg St Germain call it, *faire honneur à la nation*,—but to enjoy a more genial climate, till the season should permit me to return to my own country. I was content therefore to be called plain *monsieur*, while other foreigners, even down to the sons of Hamburgh or Lubeck merchants, were styled counts and barons. *Baron* is the lowest title of distinction given to a foreigner who can pay at Paris; he is so styled if his jacket is trimmed with silver, but if he has gold lace upon it, he immediately becomes *Monsieur le Comte*. This system of servile adulation serves as a powerful stimulus to young foreigners who come to Paris to dissipate their fortunes. There are always interested persons on the watch in the faubourg St Germain, ready to conduct such foreigners to the most expensive hotels. Lackeys are recommended, who know well how to instruct their masters in the most succinct method of squandering their money. Dancing masters,

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fencing masters, and a tribe of hungry parasites, come forward, as the plot thickens; and when, in addition to all these machinations, certain characters of the feminine gender lend their aid to the drama, and have succeeded in inveigling the youthful victim into their toils, the catastrophe of the tragedy is completed. I by no means intend to apply this censure to the French nation generally, for avarice is far from being the vice of this people, who are for the most part liberal, munificent, and obliging. Nor are the observations I have made to be supposed applicable to the whole city of Paris, but merely to hotel keepers, and persons of that class, in the quarter of the city chiefly frequented by foreigners. The cause of this systematic extortion is sufficiently obvious. Most of the capitals of Europe are great commercial seaports, whose foreign trade is sufficient not merely to support, but to enrich the inhabitants; whereas Paris is an inland city, a great part of whose inhabitants depend for their support upon the expenditure of foreign visitors. Hence the Parisians look upon carriages arriving from Brussels, Metz, or Strasburgh, with the same eyes as the merchants of other countries regard foreign vessels entering their harbours; for those carriages are laden with young foreigners who bring their gold and silver to Paris, and carry nothing back but empty purses, a cargo of new songs, and a few fashionable graces, which they pass upon their untravelled countrymen as genuine specimens of the *franchise Parisienne*. I took great pains to discover a commodious, quiet hotel at Paris; but the crowds of people that swarm in all parts of the city, and the noise and bustle that continue from morning till midnight in the streets, render it vain to look for a tranquil residence in this metropolis.

Rhedarum transitus arcto
Vicorum in flexu, et stantis convicia mandræ,
Eripient somnum Druso, vitulisque marinis.

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The hotels are crowded with families from the top to the bottom. If you happen to have a man of fashion, or *petit maître*, for your neighbour, you are annoyed with bad music or worse attempts at singing; and if a literary man should lodge near you, your tranquillity will be equally disturbed, for most Frenchmen make a great noise even in their studies. The vast population of Paris is a source of many inconveniences which I experienced neither at Amsterdam nor in London; for though London is a larger city than Paris, it has in my opinion fewer inhabitants. I am aware that this is a point contested by the English, who think the contrary can be demonstrated by their bills of mortality. But this is an uncertain criterion; for as the Parisians breathe a purer air, and live much more frugally than the Londoners, they live for the most part much longer. Besides, I have heard it affirmed in England that many thousand persons come up to London every year from the provinces, and that if this were not the case, the metropolis would soon become a desert. If this be the fact, the bills of mortality must afford a very uncertain test of the actual amount of population, and no just inference can be drawn from the annual returns of births and burials that take place in London. It must moreover be recollected, that some nations are better breeders than others; and the number of monasteries, colleges, and other societies at Paris where the divine recommendation—increase and multiply—is forbidden by canonical law, must also be taken into the account, for that divine recommendation is religiously acted upon by the English clergy. Whatever may be the inconveniences, however, attending a residence in Paris, I must confess that there is no city in which I have lived more agreeably, or enjoyed better state of health. I have never found it necessary here, as in other places, to walk or use any other

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exercise, to procure an appetite; for whether the salubrity of the air, or the dearness of provisions, were the exciting cause, I know not, but certainly my appetite at Paris has always been excellent. A great abundance of food has undoubtedly a tendency to produce an indifference for it; thus I have frequently returned from our great entertainments in the north, where the table is crowded with so many dishes, without having partaken of any one of them. But there are other and higher attractions at Paris, especially for a literary man; such as the number of libraries and learned societies, public as well as private, to which admission is easily obtained; for nothing can exceed the courtesy of the Parisian literati, and their desire of showing all possible attention and civility to strangers. I visited but few literary men at Paris, but they were some of the most distinguished. I twice paid my respects to the celebrated Montfauçon, who was always deeply engaged in his learned pursuits, and yet always accessible, full of life and cheerfulness, and to all appearances an idle man. We entered into a conversation upon the pronunciation of the Latin language, in the course of which I expressed some surprise that the letter *m* was always elided in Latin poetry. Montfauçon replied, that this letter was often omitted by the ancient Romans even in prose; and he added, that he had several inscriptions in his possession, in which the words *factum* and *Romanorum* were written *factu* and *Romanoru*. He was upon the point of showing me these inscriptions, when some other visitors came in, and prevented him from gratifying my curiosity. Father Hardouin I found less sociable; he rarely allowed visits to be paid to him, unless the visitor had some doubtful passage which he wished to submit to him. Having obtained this information from another father, I was doubting what doubt I should carry to

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father Hardouin for solution, when it occurred to me that I had lately read the following passage cited from Victor's Chronicon, by the author of the Discourse on Free-thinking:—*Thessalâ Consule, Anastasio Imperatore jubente, Sancta Evangelia, utpote ab idiotis Evangelistis scripta, corriguntur et emendantur.** I pretended to believe that this passage had been maliciously forged by the author of the Discourse of Free-thinking;† but father Hardouin, to remove this impression, took down Victor's Chronicon from his library, and, with a hand trembling with age, pointed out the passage, observing that it was not an attack upon religion, but upon the

* In the consulship of Thessala, at the command of the emperor Anastasius, the Holy Gospels, on the supposition of their having been written by unlettered Evangelists, are corrected and amended.

† Holberg probably allludes to Collins's Discourse of Free-thinking, or, what is more probable, to some Latin translation of Bentley's reply to Collins under the title of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis; a book abounding with instances of his critical sagacity, and of that talent for horse-play raillery, which he had matured by frequent exercise in the celebrated controversy with Boyle on the Epistles of Phalaris. After quoting the passage in Victor's Chronicon, Bentley observes:

'Our writer introduces this passage with a triumphant remark, that it was done in the sixth century, and recorded by one who flourished in that very age. Now this is to possess the unwary reader, that Victor reports this matter as within his own knowledge and memory. But Thessala was consul in the west A. D. 506, and this little Chronicon of a dozen pages, which might be written in as short a time as my letter here, ends A. D. 566; so that this might be nothing but a hearsay about a business supposed to be done threescore years before.

'Ab idiotis Evangelistis, by *idiot* Evangelists, says our author, who, if he's sincere in this version, proves himself a very *idiot* in the Greek and Latin acceptation of that word, ἰδιώτης, Idiota, illiteratus, indoctus, rudis. See Dufresne in his Glossaries, who takes notice that idiota, for an idiot or natural fool, is peculiar to your English law, for which he cites Rastal. Did Victor, therefore, mean idiot Evangelists in your English sense? No; but *illiterate, unlearned.* What then must we think of our author for his scandalous translation here? Whichever imputation will he choose to lie under, that he knew the meaning of Victor, or that he knew it not?' The reader who is attracted by this specimen should consult the book itself, entitled 'Remarks on a late Discourse of Free-thinking, in a Letter to F. H. D. D. by Phileleutherus Lipsiensis.'

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memory of Anastasius, who, being a heretic, might have been able to corrupt a few copies of the Gospels at Byzantium, but not those which were in the hands of the orthodox; an explanation with which I expressed myself satisfied. But when he went on to say, that it might easily be demonstrated that no such person as the emperor Anastasius had ever existed, I could scarcely refrain from laughing, for I had heard that the reverend father was still attached to his old sceptical opinions, though he had long since published a formal recantation of them. Father Hardouin was a complete literary Nestor; but he had no inclination to retire from active service in the cause of learning, holding in contempt the exclamation of Milo of Croton, who, when he beheld the wrestlers in the ring where he had once surpassed all his competitors, is said to have looked at his withered arms, and wept as he exclaimed, 'These are dead indeed!' Shortly after, I visited the celebrated father Turnemin, who is one of the most accomplished, eloquent, and witty men of the age. Such is the elegance of his manners, that you would take him for a courtier rather than the fellow of a college; indeed, if it were not for his profound erudition, there is nothing in his general deportment to distinguish him from one of the most fashionable persons in Paris. I was introduced to him by Mr Crusius, the chaplain of the Danish legation, whose learning and agreeable manners made his society generally courted in all the literary circles of Paris. Several German scholars were present, and we had a long and learned conversation. Turnemin took us into his private library, in which, among other Danish historians, was Torfreus, the author of the Chronicles of Norway. He showed us, among other rarities, a copy of the New Testament eight hundred years old, in which the celebrated passage in St John was wanting, which is also

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the case in many Greek manuscripts, especially in the famous copy in the library of St Victor. Father Turnemin was of opinion, that the revisors of the Scriptures, Eusebius, Lucianus, and Hesychius, who were suspected of Arianism, had purposely omitted this passage. I suggested in reply that Arianism was more widely diffused in the west, and yet that this passage was to be found in most of the Latin manuscripts. I added that this charge had never been urged by the orthodox fathers agains the Arians; but Turnemin replied but coldly to these observations. He afterwards introduced us to the library of Huet, which that learned bishop had left to the college of Jesuits, and to the public library of the college, of which the books presented by the learned Menage formed a considerable portion. Turnemin is a man of great pleasantry; when I asked him what he thought of father Castel's ocular harpsichord (for at this time Castel was employed about a new instrument, which by the representation of colours was to produce the same effect on the sight as that of the harpsichord on the ears) he smiled, and replied that he had himself some thoughts of producing a gustative harpsichord, adapted to the sense of tasting, in imitation of father Castel's invention; and that he had in fact communicated his design to Marchand, a celebrated musician, who approved of the plan, and thought it would be of great use to musical professors generally, and especially to hungry ones. Not long after, I visited father Castel himself, with a view of ascertaining whether his scheme of colorific music was seriously proposed, or whether it was merely a piece of ingenious pleasantry. He maintained that the scheme was to be understood literally, and attempted to explain all the particulars to me; but such is the dulness of my apprehension, that I cannot understand the scope of this ingenious person's invention: if the effect to be produced does not differ essen-

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tially from that of the common magic-lantern, he can scarcely lay claim to the merit of having made a discovery.

I also saw the celebrated Fontenelle, whose intellectual vigour is so far from being affected by his great age, that he is constantly engaged in some occupation of which posterity will reap the benefit. He had lately composed an oration for the Academy of Sciences in praise of the deceased emperor of Russia, which, in consequence of his indisposition, was pronounced by a friend. In the course of this oration he had introduced some remarks not very flattering to the Russian character, in order to enhance the merits of his hero, who had done so much towards reforming a barbarous and uncultivated people. Prince Curakin, the Russian ambassador, was so much annoyed by these remarks, that it was said to be his intention to call upon Fontenelle for an explanation of them. Under these circumstances I was curious to know whether the panegyric would be printed as it was delivered; and to my inquiries on this point Fontenelle replied, that it would be printed word for word as it was spoken. He spoke very highly in this interview of the literary merits of the Danes.

It has been truly said that there are more libraries in Paris than are to be found in whole kingdoms elsewhere; for besides the three public libraries, the Mazarine, that of St Victor, and of the Faculty of Advocates, almost every monastery and college possesses its private library, access to which may be easily obtained. The excellent library of the abbé Bignon, which I was formerly in the habit of frequenting, had now disappeared, together with the librarian. The library had been sent over to England by its purchaser, the famous Law, and the librarian had been for some years languishing in one of the public prisons. I could not learn exactly the nature of Bormann's offence; but I was con-

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cerned at his fate for the credit of my country, of which I fear the abbé Bignon must have entertained a very indifferent opinion, especially as another of my countrymen, one Matthew Bayger, who had obtained the situation of interpreter in the king's library by the abbé's recommendation, having got his salary paid to him in advance, took himself off in the night, and was not again heard of. As to Bormann, I would willingly write the life of this knight errant, if I had sufficient materials for it. He was a singular specimen of all that is most capricious and inconstant in the human character. His occupations, his manners, his religion, his garments, were continually undergoing the most extravagant mutations; in short, he exemplified in the moral, what is in vain sought for in the mechanical, world—the phenomenon of perpetual motion.

When I resided in Paris ten years before, I imagined that there were only two public libraries in that city; for I was not aware of the existence of that of the Faculty of Advocates, which, though small, is exceedingly convenient, being situated in the centre of the city, and is so arranged that the student may easily point out the books he wishes to consult. There were at that time two librarians, a young man of about seventeen years of age, and an old woman, who used to sit at her spinning-wheel, while the students were engaged in reading. I was once looking over the shelves of the library, when the old woman came up, and inquired what book I wished for. I could scarcely refrain from laughing at this question, and told her that I would inform the librarian; but as she persisted in making the inquiry, I named the book I wanted, which, to my surprise, she immediately reached from one of the shelves, and handed to me. The librarian of the library of St Victor was familiarly called *bon ami*; and indeed I found him on all occasions ex-

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ceedingly attentive and obliging. My first application to this individual for a book was made under rather ludicrous circumstances. I had observed in the catalogue, among the Danish historians, a book with the following title, 'Ludovici Requerensis Historia Danica.' I begged the librarian to hand me this work, expressing at the same time some doubts of its genuineness, as I had never heard of such an author as Ludovicus Requerensis. Upon opening the volume, the mistake was accounted for, for it proved to be Heinsius's Danish history, bound up with a life of Ludovicus Requerensis by the same author. I remember seeing an equally ridiculous title in the catalogue of the Bodleian library, viz. *Frederici II. Imperatoris Constitutiones Hafniæ.*

On one occasion, when I went to the library of St Victor with M. de Tott, son of the privy counsellor of that name, and himself not less distinguished by his upright character and solid attainments, than by his illustrious birth, the librarian showed us the collection of manuscripts, many of which are extremely rare and valuable. Besides the public and private libraries open to foreigners, there is a vast number of learned societies, to whose meetings admission may be obtained on the recommendation of any of the members, which is procured without difficulty. I was present at one of these meetings, which is held every Sunday at the house of a father of the order of orators. Scarce works collected by the members were read on that day, and when the reading was concluded, each member delivered his opinion upon the merits of the author. You might have fancied yourself to be in an assembly of Protestants, so great was the freedom of speech in which the members indulged, and so unceremoniously was the pope sometimes treated by the speakers. There was a society called elegant *par excellence*, held at the *café des beaux esprits*,

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whose meetings I sometimes attended; I say sometimes, lest, if I spoke of my frequent attendance at such meetings, I should be thought ambitious of passing for one of the gifted few myself. The landlady of this coffee-house was an old woman named Marion; hence it was facetiously called *le café des Marionettes*. The celebrated de la Motte, whose reputation is deservedly high in various branches of elegant literature, used to frequent this house daily, and acted as president at the meetings of the society. When I reflect on all these circumstances, I am not surprised at the great number of excellent works which appear every year in France, where, in so many learned societies, books are read, examined, corrected, and polished, before they are committed to the press.

Yet men of learning at Paris complain that the liberal arts are on the decline in France, and the celebrated Turnemin assigned three causes for this decline. One of these, he declared, was the circumstance of education being almost exclusively in the hands of the priests, who for the most part hate philosophy, and think it enough if a candidate for the ecclesiastical profession can bend the knee, elevate the host, and mutter a few words decently in performing the ceremony of the mass, as in Russia the whole qualification for priest's orders formerly consisted in being able to pronounce the words *hospodi homilio* ten times without once taking breath. I cannot help thinking, however, that this opinion of Turnemin was a little tinctured by party prejudice, since the whole business of education is monopolised by the reverend fathers of the college of Jesuits. Another reason which he assigned for the decline of learning was the dissipated manner of living in which the youth of Paris indulged. This upon the whole did not appear to me to be a very satisfactory reason; though I must confess that, on my second

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visit, the Parisians seemed to be more in the habit of making copious libations to Bacchus than they were ten years before. The third reason alleged, namely, the decrease in the amount of encouragement generally given to literary exertion, seemed to be one of much greater weight; for unquestionably there was a sensible decrease of such encouragement since the death of Lewis the Fourteenth.

The Parisians seemed to me to be much less anxious to propagate the Romish faith than they were on my former visit, when I was perpetually engaged in theological disputations; but I was then a young man, whom they might suppose it an easier matter to ensnare. I was only once attacked on the score of my heresy by an old fellow who had a monstrous itch for disputation. Before engaging with this person, I asked him whether he had any thing new to advance, which was not to be found in printed books; and I told him frankly, that if he had no other weapons to use except those which had been wielded again and again by champions of the Romish religion, it would be useless to attack me, for all the old arguments were familiar to me. Upon his admitting that he had nothing original to advance, I entreated him to spare my time and lungs, hinting that nothing could be more absurd than to fight over again the same battles which had been so often waged by the ablest controversialists. Perceiving, however, that the old Papist was eager for a contest, which I had no direct means of escaping, I attacked him in a new way. I affected to admit that most of the articles of faith professed by Protestants were problematical, since the Scriptures were differently interpreted by different sects, and it was possible therefore that Protestants might sometimes be wrong. The possibility of error being admitted, I admitted also that error could not but be unacceptable to the Supreme Being; and when all

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the persons present at this disputation were curious to know whither my argument would tend, I proceeded in the following manner. The Roman Catholics believe that good works are meritorious, and perhaps good works are so; but the Protestants take a safer course in believing good works to be worthless; for as a prince cannot be displeased with a subject who, however transcendent his merits may be, takes no credit to himself on the score of those merits, but declares that all the rewards he may have received are conferred upon him by the mere grace and favour of his sovereign, and not because he is entitled to them, so the error of the Protestants, admitting it to be an error, founded upon such a spirit of humility, cannot but be acceptable to God. The Roman Catholics believe in a purgatory, and perhaps there is some intermediate place of punishment where sins are atoned for; but the Protestants take a safer course in believing that an account of our past life must be rendered immediately after death, and in inculcating the necessity of living virtuously, since after death there is no hope of a remission of sins. The Roman Catholics invoke saints in whose intercession they believe, and perhaps saints do intercede for us; but the Protestants take a safer course in not invoking saints, for, even admitting them to be wrong, their error cannot be displeasing either to God, or to the saints themselves. It cannot be displeasing to God, since God cannot but receive with benignity those who seek directly the fountain of mercy, and since he himself has declared that frequent prayer is acceptable to him. Neither can it be displeasing to the saints themselves, that we obediently follow them as guides in the true paths of righteousness, acknowledging the Saviour of the world as our only intercessor; for if the saints are displeased at our invoking God alone, from that moment they cease to be saints. The Roman

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Catholics worship images, and perhaps the worship of images is unobjectionable; but the Protestants take a safer course in raising their hands to heaven like the saints; for although we concede that the idolatry of the Catholics differs greatly from the idolatry of the Chinese, still it must be admitted that if a man, prostrated before the colossus of St Christopher, execrates at the same time the idolatry of the Chinese, he differs very little from a drunkard who pathetically declaims against the sin of intemperance. The Roman Catholics do not think the communion of both elements necessary, and perhaps it is not; but the Protestants take a safer course in believing it to be necessary, since even their adversaries do not deny that the sacrament was so celebrated by its Divine Founder. The Roman Catholics shut the gates of Paradise against infants who die before baptism; the Protestants take a safer course in not excluding infants from Paradise, since God might otherwise be supposed to inflict punishment on the innocent; and if this were admitted, it would follow that the world was governed, not by a just, wise, and merciful Ruler, but by fate. The weight of this argument is acknowledged by the Catholics themselves in their controversies with the Jansenists on the subject of absolute decrees. The reading of the Scriptures is prohibited to laymen by the Roman Catholics, because, they say, it opens a door to error: and perhaps it does open a door; but Protestants take a safer course in permitting the laity to read the Scriptures, since an erroneous faith is better than no faith, and they who believe without examining the grounds of their belief, believe nothing, unless we admit in religion the maxim which obtains in law, that what a man does by the agency of another he does himself, and that therefore to believe by proxy is the same thing as if you believed yourself. I am afraid however, that an

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Italian or Spanish layman makes a wrong calculation, if he supposes that, when he shall be called upon to render an account of his faith, he will satisfy God by saying, 'I believed every thing which the people living in the same street with me believed; I have never indeed happened to see myself the book which contains the rule of my faith, but it is enough that some of my fellow-citizens have seen it.' It would be easier for one who had formed erroneous opinions in interpreting the Scriptures to excuse his errors by saying, 'These are the articles of faith which after long and serious examination I judged most worthy to be believed!'

My adversary had nothing to say in reply to this reasoning; and while he was scratching his head as if he expected to find an argument in his hair, I continued to follow up my advantage. 'You see,' said I, 'with what liberality I treat you. I admit that most articles of faith are problematical; I admit that it is difficult to interpret the divine law, or, if you will, that the whole sacred writings are obscure, so that, after the most diligent examination, we cannot always elicit their true meaning. I do not say that Protestants are not liable to error; but I maintain that if we err, we err without danger, whereas, if the Roman Catholics walk in darkness, it is darkness which threatens them with destruction. For if good works be not meritorious, and if it be the will of God that we should be saved by his grace alone, Roman Catholics cannot be absolved from the sin of arrogance and presumption, since that which is conceded by the grace of God they claim as the reward due to their own merits. Again, if the doctrine of purgatory be of human invention, this error admits of no excuse, since it is founded on the supposed imperfection of the atonement made by Christ, in aid of which this intermediate place of purgation has been invented; to say

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nothing of the effect of a doctrine which is as pernicious to mankind from its tendency to lull us into a fatal security, as it is profitable to the clergy by reason of the immense revenues which the church derives from it. If the Roman Catholics are wrong in invoking saints, they commit a grievous error, because others are thereby made partakers of the worship which is due to God alone. Besides, the saints they invoke are either really saints, or they are imaginary beings that have never in reality existed, or they are impostors. If they are really saints, the danger is not removed by distinguishing between religious and civil worship; for the consecration of temples, votive offerings, daily supplications, and the worship of their images, make them at least demigods. If they have in reality no existence, like the thousands of imaginary martyrs, St Alenanach, and others whose names the more sagacious Catholics have expunged from the calendar, the worship of them is foolish and ridiculous. If they are impostors, it is worse than the superstitions of the Indians; for the Indians have the excuse of contending with evil spirits, whereas the Roman Catholics have only to deal with scoundrels of their own species. Lastly, if the worship of images be an error, the Roman Catholics cannot escape the charge of idolatry, nor can they impute idolatry as a sin to the Gentiles; for what matters it whether I worship God under the form of a bull or of a golden image? If the proscription of unbaptized infants be an erroneous doctrine, it is one of no light character; for to maintain that the innocent are proscribed is to impute injustice to the Almighty. Lastly, if the communion with both elements be necessary, the Roman Catholics are guilty of theft; and if the reading of the Scriptures be necessary, faith, which without knowledge is null, is banished from among the laity. 'Hence it is evident,' said I, 'that

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Henry the Fourth did not consult his own safety, when, in balancing between the two religions, he determined to embrace the Roman Catholic faith.'

In the course of these observations I was frequently interrupted by my adversary, who talked of the antiquity and infallibility of the Romish church, of the upstart pretensions of the sect of Lutherans, of the promise made to St Peter, and other arguments of that description, to which Papists are in the habit of resorting when their case becomes desperate. But secure of triumph, if I persisted in the line of argument I had adopted, I would not suffer myself to be diverted from it. I called upon him to examine the alleged errors of the Protestants, and to say whether they were opposed to the justice and mercy of the Almighty, whether they derogated from the majesty of his name, whether they tended to diminish the reverence we owe to our Creator, or to eradicate piety from our hearts. As my adversary had nothing to reply to all this, I left him, merely asking him whether it was reasonable to persecute with fire and sword men who erred to so good a purpose?

Having escaped from this controversy, I was not again molested at Paris on the score of my religion. On my return, however, not far from Brussels, as I was sitting between a loquacious captain in the army, and a superstitious old woman, the captain took occasion to mention the miraculous conversion of some soldiers in his company; and as I did not give quite the same credit to the story as the rest of the passengers, he suspected me to be a Protestant, and challenged me to maintain my opinions in single argument. I had no inclination to engage in a discussion of this kind with the man of war, and I accordingly beseeched him to be pacific, alleging, as a motive for his forbearance, that I was labouring

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under a severe head-ach. The captain however would neither consent to peace, nor even to a suspension of hostilities, but endeavoured by a flood of rhetorical nonsense to draw me out to the combat. I adhered to the resolution I had made not to engage in this discussion, and I began to talk to the old woman of the severity of the weather. The old woman, perceiving from my countenance that I was ill at ease, and concluding that the captain's arguments had convinced me, determined to put the finishing stroke to my conversion by detailing a number of preposterous miracles, for the truth of which she appealed to the captain, who not only confirmed every one of them with a military oath, but favoured me with a supplement of his own. To escape from this persecution, I was obliged at last to return the fire with a few miracles of my own invention, which I affirmed to have taken place in my own country. Among others I mentioned the case of a lady who, having abjured the Protestant faith while she was big with child, afterwards brought forth an infant with two heads; also, that of another female who in the very act of abjuration was transformed into a milestone. I moreover affirmed that in the kingdom of Denmark the angel Gabriel annually sent down from the clouds a letter in his own handwriting, in which he exhorted us to beware of the errors of Popery. My companions, perceiving that I was laughing at them, voted me an incorrigible heretic; and I met with no farther annoyance on my journey.

I determined to spend the winter at Paris, experience having convinced me that the air of this place was extremely favourable to my constitution. Besides, as I had amused myself by translating two of my comedies into the French language, some of my friends thought it worth while to try what success they would meet with on the French stage.

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But many obstacles occurred which prevented me from carrying my design into execution. About the end of September the two companies of comedians were summoned to Fontainebleau, where they remained till Christmas; and as I was obliged to prepare for my return to the north in the month of February, I had no time to devote to an experiment which would have required my attention for at least two months. I merely sent by a friend an account of the plot of the *Political Tinman* to Fontainebleau, that I might ascertain what the Italian company thought of that piece. The manager of the company, Signor Lelli, wrote me word that he thought the comedy wonderfully pleasant—*tutta maravigliosa;* but he declared in a subsequent letter that he should be afraid of bringing it on the stage, lest the satire should be supposed to be directed against certain persons of distinction, who had risen from low situations to high offices of state. My friend endeavoured to overcome his scruples by showing that the satire of the piece was in reality directed against the lower orders; but Lelli could not get rid of his apprehensions. In the mean time the plot of this comedy became known to a certain author who is in the habit of poaching upon other men's territory; and this person offered a play founded upon it to Lelli. Lelli was still afraid to accept it; so circumscribed in these days is that freedom of speech which used to be so much admired in the Italian company, and which, in the time of Lewis the Fourteenth, was the very soul of their performances. The way in which the plot of my play became matter of notoriety, furnishes an instance of the levity of the French character; for I had only communicated it confidentially to a few friends, on whose secresy I thought I could depend. The secret was soon known, however, to all the world, and among the rest to the aforesaid author, who lost no

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time in turning it to account. Lelli had mentioned the subject of the play to some members of the French company, one of whom, to prevent it from being brought forward by the rival company, wrote me a private letter, assuring me that I should ill consult my own interest if I suffered my comedy to be performed by the Italian company. Meanwhile the time was fast approaching in which it became necessary for me to make preparations for my journey homeward.

Another obstacle to the production of my piece was the corrupt taste of the Parisians, which has had so baneful an influence on the character of dramatic writings, that a legitimate comedy has not been produced for many years. So perverse is the present taste, that even Moliere's comedies are only tolerated because they have been so long esteemed masterpieces; and it is generally admitted that if the best of them were now to be produced for the first time, it would in all probability be hooted from the stage. I had sufficient evidence of this depravation of the public taste, in observing the deserted state of the French theatre whenever any comedy of the best stamp was performed, while all Paris rushed in crowds to the representation of a stupid piece, called *Le Roi des Cocaignes*, full of singing, dancing, magical tricks, &c. and every way worthy of a company of mountebanks.

The ill-will which had long subsisted between the two companies broke out into open war at Fontainebleau, and on their return to Paris they assailed each other with bitter invectives. The French lampooned the Italians in a piece called *Impromptu de la Folie*, in which an abundance of dumb show, singing, and dancing, adapted to the taste of the Parisians, was introduced. The Italians, never slow in taking vengeance on their enemies, repelled the attack in two comedies of a similar description.

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In this warfare nearly a whole month was consumed.

I was farther induced to give up all thoughts of bringing my plays upon the French stage in consequence of some absurd dramatic rules which the French have recently adopted, such as that all moral or satirical pieces should be concluded in one act, most of my comedies being in five, or at least in three acts; and also that no characters belonging to the lower classes of society should be introduced on the stage. Hence, if the *Political Tinman* had been performed, I should have been obliged to transform my artisans into doctors, advocates, and other persons not belonging to the lowest classes. The effect of such an alteration would have been to destroy the whole point and spirit of the satire, which is levelled against the lower classes, and not against such persons as doctors, advocates, &c., who may be very well acquainted with the machinery of politics, and who are, in point of fact, frequently called upon to discharge political functions. Another object of this play, which is to expose the unmeasured arrogance which so frequently characterises those who from an humble origin make their way to distinguished situations, would have been totally defeated; and, in fact, had the comedy been exhibited in a French dress, it would have been as languid and unmeaning as in its original shape it was thought to be pleasant and instructive. That these rules are not founded upon any sound principle, but are merely introduced in compliance with the vitiated taste of the Parisians, is evident from the fact that servants and countrymen are still tolerated in French plays, the introduction of such characters being supposed to be no violation of decorum.

The Parisians are like persons who have fed so continually on partridges, that they come at last to

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dislike even the smell of them; for they can no longer tolerate a regular comedy, of which the plot is consistently conducted through five acts to a striking denouement. A play is discordant to their ears in the exact ratio of the harmony of its proportions. If I were disposed to analyze their modern dramatic pieces, I should have no difficulty in showing that most of them are not only disfigured by gross improbabilities, but that they have not even the remotest resemblance to legitimate comedies. While I was at Paris two new plays by different authors, *Le Babillard*, and *L'Indiscret*, were produced. So far were these authors from observing the rules of Aristotle—for the protasis, epitasis, and catastrophe, of the ancients are as little known to modern writers as the unexplored regions at the poles—that they did not even succeed in conveying an idea of the character which gave the title to their plays. What idea, for instance, can an audience form of a babbler, from the introduction of a character who is loquacious upon a single occasion; or of a person who cannot be intrusted with a secret, from an isolated sketch in which a party, in a solitary instance, betrays confidential communication? These plays did not furnish more than sufficient materials for a single scene. The distinguishing character of the hero of a play can only be impressed upon an audience by making it a prominent feature in the drama. His vices or follies should be represented as so besetting him, that neither fear nor shame can cure him of them; and the interest of the audience should be kept alive by the perplexities into which his indiscretions are continually leading him. But the babbler of this play is represented gossiping among his friends in a single scene, until the entrance of certain persons, who inform him that while he has been wasting his time in frivolous conversation, he has lost a critical opportunity of

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improving his prospects in life. Yet these plays, vapid as they were, were splendid compositions, compared with the pieces which followed, namely, *L'Impromptu de la Folie*, and *Les Amusemens de l'Automne*—productions utterly unworthy of this celebrated theatre, and of the performers, whose admirable skill, whenever they have an opportunity of displaying it, is beyond all praise.

With regard to the comedians of the Italian company, they are respectable when they represent plays in their own language, but they disgust the audience whenever they perform French plays; for, with the exception of the wife of Lelli, there is not one of the company who can pronounce the French language tolerably. The Harlequin of the present day can only act such a character as Mopsus; and a play therefore, to be successful, must have a Mopsus for its hero. Hence the same dish is served up again and again in almost all the modern pieces, which uniformly turn upon the same subject, such as *Les Amans Ignorans*, *Arlequin poli par l'Amour*, *Arlequin Sauvage*, *Timon Misanthrope*, &c. For the same reason none of the old theatrical pieces can be acted with success; for the pantomimists in the present company are so far from equalling the Harlequins and Scaramouches of former days, that the present Harlequin has not much higher pretensions than the Punch of the strolling mountebanks. This theatre, however, is chiefly frequented for its parodies on French plays; for some of the performers in the Italian company imitate with wonderful felicity the voice and gestures of the French comedians. Parody is a species of composition with which I have always been greatly delighted; but parodies are manufactured at Paris to such an excess, that this kind of writing is now held extremely cheap. Every corner of the city and suburbs teems with parodies; and with some fastidious persons the bare mention

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of a new parody is sufficient to excite disgust. But I have already dwelt too long on the subject of Parisian theatricals; and it occurs to me that I may be expected to say something of the French court. If I had ever been acquainted with a courtier, or with any person who could have given me information on that subject, I would detail circumstantially every thing pertaining to the state of the court; I would delineate with a faithful pencil the persons and characters of the king, queen, princes of the blood, and other members of the royal family, and I would give a minute description of all the amusements of the court, though I have never been present at any of them, lest it should be objected to me that I led an obscure life in France, and neglected those objects of curiosity which are the sole attractions to most foreigners who visit Paris. I candidly confess, however, that upon this occasion I saw neither Versailles nor Fontainebleau; though, if I were required to give an account of such matters, nothing could be easier for me than to say I beheld a handsome monarch, robust in person, and gay in his manners, a mild, pious, and affable queen, a duke of Bourbon of dusky complexion and grave deportment, and a duke of Orleans, the very image of his father. Who could impeach my veracity, if I said all this? For I believe it to be the truth, though I repeat it only upon hearsay.

Having passed the winter at Paris, I began to think of returning to my native country. For a whole month before my departure I was tormented with anxious forebodings, and I dreaded as much to undertake the journey as if I had been going to the Indies. The inconveniences I suffered on this journey, separately considered, may seem hardly worth detailing; but when the whole amount of them is taken into account, they are far from being inconsiderable, and seem in some degree to justify

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my inauspicious forebodings. In the first place, a royal ordinance was issued, as I was preparing to depart, prohibiting the exportation of French or other money from the kingdom, and requiring all gold and silver to be carried into the royal treasury, and exchanged at a loss to the holders of about 25 per cent. Hence the money I had set apart for my journey to Amsterdam suffered such a reduction, that I feared my whole stock would be exhausted before I arrived at that place. I left Paris in the middle of the month of February, in the public vehicle which proceeds from thence to Artois. There are two classes of persons greatly to be dreaded by travellers whose purses are indifferently furnished—Capuchin friars, and pretty women. The former by virtue of their order, and the latter by privilege of their sex, are generally supported at the expense of the other travellers. It was with no slight alarm therefore that, upon getting into the carriage, I saw two young ladies seated in it, especially as there were two officers in the army sitting opposite to them, whose gestures, and soft colloquies with their fair companions, threatened a fearful inroad upon my purse; for I was too well acquainted with the laws of gallantry observed on these occasions, not to foresee that the officers would insist upon the male part of the company paying all the expenses of the lovely creatures who honoured us with their presence. Nor was I mistaken in my conjecture; for the ladies never declined a dinner or supper on the road; and when the bill was to be paid, they availed themselves of the privilege of their sex, either by retiring, or by saying nothing upon the subject. In this way matters were conducted for two days, when finding, after a calculation of my coin, that I could no longer remain in this company unless a change of system were adopted, I declared my poverty to one of the officers. Upon this a new

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arrangement was made, and it was determined that every one should pay for himself. At a village not far from Peronne I nearly broke one of the bones of my finger, in drawing towards the fire a table which seemed to be constructed for the express purpose of breaking the finger of any person that touched it; for my ring-finger was so completely wedged in the table that I could not by any effort extract it, and I suffered the most excruciating torture for nearly a quarter of an hour, which was consumed in searching for a hatchet to separate the joint of the table.

Not long after, having got down from the carriage to walk by a path which the driver stated to be a short cut to the next town, I lost my way, and wandered about until dusk, before I could regain the high road, when I was obliged to hire a horse to proceed to Bapaume. The animal was a lean, sorry jade, such as is commonly condemned to a mill, but so vicious withal, that I was every moment afraid of being thrown from the saddle, and of breaking some of my bones. I felt nothing of the severe north-wind which began to blow tempestuously; for I was perspiring under the apprehension that I should soon ignominiously descend from my equestrian position. At length I arrived at Bapaume, where I found my former companions, to whom I gave a pathetic account of my manifold misfortunes. When I came to Amsterdam, the letter which I expected from Norway had not arrived, and I remained eight days at this city without money. At last I found an old acquaintance, from whom I borrowed a few pieces, on which I made shift to live for another week, when my letter arrived. The letter was written by a friend, who advised me to lose no time in returning to my native country, as my enemies were actively engaged in plotting my ruin. I mention all these circumstances to show, that the

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misfortunes which happen to me are almost always linked together, as if one produced the other; and I could give many instances of the truth of this observation. It is usual to go from Paris to Brussels by the mountains of Hainault; for as this is the shortest route, it is supposed to be the least expensive. But it is far cheaper and more commodious to go by Lisle; and there are, besides, many cities worth seeing on that route, such as Bapaume, Arras, Douay, Lisle, Courtray, Menin, Ghent; all which are not distant more than a few hours' journey from each other. I am not less delighted with variety in the human species than in natural scenery, and I was much pleased therefore with this journey through Lisle, as I had every day a fresh carriage and new travelling companions. Sometimes I had Frenchmen, sometimes Englishmen, Spaniards, and Germans, for my fellow-travellers; sometimes military and sometimes literary men. For two days I was accompanied by an old man, who had during fourteen years followed the trade of a flibustier or buccaneer in the West Indies. He made many sensible observations about these buccaneers, and I obtained from him a good deal of information which is not to be met with, or is not very accurately given, in printed books. Upon my expressing my surprise that a man of such just sentiments and excellent character, for so he appeared to me, should have embraced so profligate a mode of life, he replied, that he joined the buccaneers when he was quite a boy, and scarce knew the difference between morality and immorality; but that he abandoned this way of life as soon as he came to years of maturity. We met another carriage on this journey about the hour of dinner, and the passengers of both vehicles dined together at the same inn. There were two Germans, two Frenchmen, and a Spaniard, in the other carriage. The Germans called for all the roast and

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boiled meat in the house, the Frenchmen had a few eggs set before them, and the Spaniard dined upon air at the window. Thus all the travellers maintained the character of the nation to which they belonged; for Spaniards, like spirits, live without eating or drinking. During the three weeks I spent at Amsterdam I lived in that distinguished seat of commerce in a state of great seclusion; for the life of a literary man in a city where all arts, except that of making money, are neglected, is sufficiently dull. I paid two visits however to the celebrated John Le Clerc, whom I found, notwithstanding his advanced years, in the full possession both of bodily and mental vigour. On one of these occasions we were locked into the room by his maid-servant, and to me the confinement was most delightful; for while we were waiting for the return of the servant, we discussed a great variety of literary subjects. The name of this great scholar was not known in the street where he resided, a circumstance at which I could not but feel some indignation; for if you ask for the houses of Jacob the banker, Cornelius the fuller, Ephraim the Jew, and others of that class, you are instantly directed to them. On receiving my long expected letter, I set out for Hamburgh, through East Friezland. I learned a great deal during this journey of the tumults which at that time agitated Friezland, and especially the city of Leyer; but as experience had taught me that accounts of this description are generally much exaggerated, I felt little apprehension in travelling by this route. On my arrival at Leyer however, about mid-day, every thing bore a warlike appearance. Troops were drawn up in different parts of the city; pieces of artillery were placed in the market-place; and numbers of armed citizens, and countrymen bearing pikes and other offensive weapons, were seen in various directions, breathing rebellion and

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bloodshed. It may be readily imagined that I had no desire to protract my stay among this refractory people; and I lost no time therefore in hiring a carriage, in which, after taking a slight refreshment, I left the city.

The causes of the rebellion at Leyer cannot be understood without a reference to the history of Friezland published some years ago by the learned Breneypen, counsellor of the duke of Friezland. In that work the author endeavours to prove that the rights of princes have been invaded by the states of Friezland in opposition to the imperial decrees, which he laboriously examines and explains in favour of his own prince; in fact Breneypen's history is supposed by the states to have laid the foundation for the present disturbances. It has been thought singular that no one should have attempted a refutation of this work. It is said that a learned Dutchman offered the states a history written in direct opposition to Breneypen, which, as they could not agree about the terms, he suppressed. However this may be, no refutation has ever been published; whether from ignorance, or from diffidence in their cause, on the part of the jurists of Friezland, I cannot pretend to determine. After some years of disputation and mutual distrust, the dispute was brought to a crisis by the abolition of the ancient senate of the states at Embden, and the institution of a new senate at Aurick. Upon this the Friezlanders took up arms, declaring that this act went to the destruction of their liberties. The partisans of the duke maintained, that the prince meant nothing more than to compel the states to render an account of the administration of the public money; those who favoured the states, on the contrary, insisted that this was a mere pretext employed by Breneypen, in order to accomplish that change of the constitution which he had long medi-

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tated; and to exasperate farther the minds of the people, they persuaded them that there would be an end to the reformed religion in Friezland, if they did not vigorously resist these machinations. Embden and afterwards Leyer were for a long time the seats of these disturbances; in the former city a severe conflict had taken place the year before, in which several citizens were slain. The duke of Friezland had now sent some troops to take possession of a place not far from Leyer; and the inhabitants of Leyer were so exasperated at this step, that the townspeople and peasantry had marched armed from the city to repel the duke's troops. This was the state of affairs when I entered the city.

I left Leyer, as I have already stated, immediately after taking a slight repast. The whole road was lined with armed countrymen, who seemed astonished at my boldness in travelling at such a juncture; but as I was furnished with a royal passport, I continued my journey without apprehension. When we arrived near Notmore, however, where the forces of both parties were drawn up, the driver was afraid to proceed farther, especially as he saw some countrymen brought back wounded to the city, although, as I afterwards heard, these men were not wounded by the enemy, but in consequence of the carelessness of their comrades. While we were stopping, in doubt what course to take, the whole army of the states began to make a retrograde movement towards the city. Their retreat, indeed, might have been termed a flight, if there had been any enemy in pursuit of them. The citizens and countrymen, afraid of being exposed to ridicule, alleged as the cause of their retreat the want of artillery, with which the duke's troops were provided; but I believe that on recovering from the effects of intoxication (for they had commenced the expedition under the influence of brandy) their courage, if it had not entirely

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oozed out, had grown considerably cooler. Following the throng, I fell in with a captain of the name of Andrews, who, after making some inquiries as to my name, country, and route, recommended me to retrace my steps. This Andrews was the son of the consul at Embden; he was a man of excellent character and conduct, whom the people of Leyer at that time looked up to with the same reverence as the Romans, when they were struggling for liberty, regarded Junius Brutus. On my return to the city, I had a dispute with the man of whom I hired the carriage, who insisted upon my paying the sum I had agreed to give for the whole journey. I maintained that he was only entitled to payment in the event of completing the service he had engaged to perform; that in strictness, as he had failed to perform that service, nothing was due to him; and that such would be the legal decision, if he brought the matter before any tribunal. But it is vain to appeal to laws or rights in a city where anarchy holds rule; nor can the voice of justice be heard amidst the din of armed multitudes, and the horrors of civil dissension. I was compelled not only to satisfy the driver, but to pay the owner of the carriage twice as much as he was entitled to. After passing a miserable and almost sleepless night in this disturbed city, I took my passage in a boat the next day; but I could not approach the shore until the departure of the army, which, being now provided with two pieces of cannon, set out on a fresh expedition. This single league cost me more money than the whole journey from Amsterdam to Neuberg. Towards evening, when I arrived at a village called Dendéren, I was informed of the success of this expedition, and of the departure of the duke of Friezland's troops. I proceeded through Oldenburg to Bremen, at which place, as I was obliged to remain three days, I took the opportunity

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of visiting the professors of the school, among whom was Hasæus, a man of great and various erudition. He showed me his library, which is considered at once the most copious and select in Bremen. The library of the school is well furnished, but almost all the books are in folio. The inhabitants of Bremen may be divided into two classes, citizens and doctors; which latter class is so numerous, that if a conscription were to be made of them in time of war, they would form a respectable army. Wherever the eye turns, it meets a doctor; hence, if there were no distinction between doctors and men of learning, Bremen ought to be reckoned the most learned city in Europe. At Hamburgh I visited some literary men, among whom were the learned Fabricius and Hubner; and after remaining a short time at this city, I proceeded to Copenhagen.

Having thus concluded my fifth expedition, I set about finishing a poem which I had commenced before my departure, entitled *Metamorphosis*. A society is supposed to consist of animals, trees, and plants, over which the sylvan gods and goddesses—Pan, Sylvanus, Flora, Pomona, &c. preside; and as in Ovid men are transformed into brutes and trees, so here brutes and trees are transformed into men. For instance, the lofty oak becomes a man, from whom spring the nobles of the earth, who, not degenerating from the parent stock, are like it wooden, like it produce foliage and not fruit, and like it afford a protecting shade to poor philosophers. The pie is transformed into a barber, whence the loquacity peculiar to the shaving tribe; the goat into a philosopher, whence the beards and pugnacity of philosophers. The sun-flower is changed into a court-lady; and as the flower always turns towards the sun, so court-ladies watch the smiles of their mistresses, &c. I endeavoured to imitate the style and spirit of the poet of Salmo as far as my

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humble poetical powers permitted; but as painters generally make an indifferent copy of a beautiful original, so I confess that I fell far short of the master I strove to imitate; for Ovid's vein of poetry is as much beyond my reach, as are the elegance and richness of his Latin style. My poem however pleased people of distinction and literary men, on account of the originality of the invention, the ease of the versification, and the skilful connection of its parts, by which one story seems to spring naturally out of another. By the people generally, who are chiefly delighted with broad satirical pieces, it was less favourably received. A coarse, vulgar poem soon after made its appearance, in which my production was virulently assailed.

There were not wanting persons who urged me to take vengeance on the writer; but in proportion as the invective to which he had recourse was more unmeasured, his poem appeared to me to be less deserving of a reply. Among the objections urged against my poem the principal one was, that it had a tendency to degrade the human species, and that men would be less ready to discharge their various duties, when they saw their origin traced to brutes and trees; as if there were danger that an adulterer, who in my poem descends from the cuckow, would on that account the less cheerfully follow his calling; as if the barber would be less loquacious, the schoolman less pugnacious, &c. I was so far from wishing to engage in a controversy on account of the abuse I received, that I would not even take measures to restrain the printer, though the magistrates of the city themselves pointed out to me the means of redressing myself, and many of my friends strongly dissuaded me against remaining inactive. But I am naturally so averse to litigation, that there is scarcely any injury I would not suffer, rather than have recourse to the laws for redressing it.

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In the preface to this poem I declared my intention of making peace with mankind, and my disinclination to writing satires. Some persons attributed this declaration to remorse of conscience, and considered it a tacit condemnation of my former opinions; but they were mistaken, for though I repented of having been engaged for so many years in so unproductive an employment, yet I was not ashamed of an occupation which in my opinion embellishes the life of a philosopher. With what intentions and for what end I navigated so long amidst these rocks and shoals, is sufficiently pointed out in the apologetic preface prefixed to my poetical works. They who are not satisfied with this explanation, and who persist in suspecting and abusing me, must include in their invective men distinguished for their learning, their integrity, and their piety, under whose sanction and with whose approbation I have published my poems, satires, and plays. If I have erred, I have erred with some of the most distinguished characters of the age, who urged me to write, and sanctioned my writings by their approbation. And indeed this fact alone is a sufficient answer to all the imputations which have been cast upon me; for if I were to mention the names of those by whose advice I was governed, and of whose judgment I availed myself before committing my works to the press, all suspicion of unworthy motives would be at once removed. I was besides deterred from writing by the number of licentious lampoons circulated through the city, in which anonymous writers pandered to the bad passions of the people. There were not wanting those who, either from ignorance of my real character and disposition, or from malicious motives, declared me to be the author of those productions; but I solemnly protest that nothing in the jocose style of writing was composed by me,

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except what was published under the name of John Michaelis.

I should now bring this narrative to a conclusion, if it did not seem necessary to add something by way of finish, touching my character and manners; for as few persons of the order of professors have been more exposed to the criticism of their fellow-citizens, I may perhaps be allowed in my turn to draw my own portrait with the same pencil which has sketched the portraits of so many other men.

I was sensible from my earliest years, that nothing was so injurious to my health as indulgence in what are commonly termed pleasures. Accordingly I lived so sparingly and frugally, that though a boy in years, I seemed to my youthful companions an old man in habits. My extreme temperance and severity of manners often exposed me to raillery and facetiousness, which, as I was extremely choleric, I did not very patiently digest. Nevertheless, I made no alteration in my mode of living, but rather increased the severity of my regimen with my increasing years. Thus I was in the habit, when a boy, of drinking wine greatly diluted with water; but in manhood I abjured wine altogether, deeming it poison to my constitution. At length, not satisfied with my accustomed habits of frugality, I endeavoured to limit myself to certain measured portions of meat and drink, imitating the example of certain persons who have declared this mathematical sort of diet to be wonderfully salutary. My friends attributed this resolution not to philosophy, but to absolute folly; they often expostulated with me upon what they considered a deplorable infatuation, and contended that I was to all practical purposes a dead man; for to eat apart from the rest of the world, said they, is to live out of the pale of society; and what can be more absurd than to withdraw yourself from the society of mankind in

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the flower of your age? I replied, that sociality did not consist in eating and drinking; but this argument made not the slightest impression. Others, whose reasoning powers were of a denser description, assassinated me with commonplaces and texts of scripture which they did not understand, declaring that to weigh what you ate and drank, was nothing short of distrusting the providence of God, and that there were instances of persons who by thus protracting life had incurred the divine wrath. To this I replied, that I did not recollect any instances in which the divine wrath had been manifested on that account; and that if any such instances were to be met with in books, I should put the same faith in them as in a nursery tale. I remembered indeed that this charge was made against John Chrysostom in a certain synod; but the accusation was of a piece with many other ridiculous charges made against him in the same synod. I added, that it behoved every man to endeavour by all possible care and attention to secure and preserve that first of blessings, a sound mind in a sound body. But these arguments availed nothing against the unceasing expostulations of my friends; and I found that the only chance I had of escaping from their importunities, was to say nothing in my defence.

The complaint under which I labour, I inherit from my father; for diseases as well as other possessions are acquired by succession. I take no medicine, because I am ignorant of the source of my disorder. Sometimes a torpor comes over my whole body, and at these periods I may be seen walking like a snail; at other times I walk with surprising velocity; sometimes I am seized with pains in my head, at other times the enemy attacks my feet. The stomach is often the seat of my disorder, and then I feel alternate heat and cold in

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that quarter; sometimes there is too much fermentation, and sometimes none whatever in it. For two years I was afflicted with a severe head-ach, which compelled me to abstain from all meditation. During this time I read nothing but the journals and historical works; but my disease having shifted to another quarter, at the end of two years I took great pleasure in philosophical speculations, and in poetry. I then wrote my heroic poem, with the satires and comedies of which I have given an account in this narrative. Hence I manage my complaints according to my own judgment, without taking advice about them; for I believe physicians would waste their time in attempting to subdue a malady which assumes such a variety of shapes. My mind is differently affected, according to the state of my bodily health; and it is my great object to prevent these mental affections from running into excess. The affections I allude to, are joy, sorrow, fear, courage, torpor, alacrity, enthusiasm, indifference; and these prevail according to the excess of vicious humours in different parts of my body. Thus, when my disease attacked the region of the heart, I used formerly to be seized with a mania for reform, and inveighed vehemently against the depravity of mankind. As soon as the complaint shifted to another part of the body, no one could be more indulgent to human frailties than myself. Hence, whenever I feel this desire of reforming mankind coming upon me, experience has taught me that I should attack, not mankind, but my own bowels; for my enthusiasm invariably gives way to a few laxative pills; and as soon as these have operated, the world appears to me with quite a different aspect.

I am apt to be too fastidious in my estimate of social qualities, as some men are too delicate in the choice of their food; for there is scarcely one man in a hundred whose society I can endure. One

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annoys me with his conversation, another with his gestures; in short, I have been compelled to retire with disgust from most of my acquaintances, and to seek consolation in solitude. As there is nothing I admire more than brevity, so there is no class of men I abominate more than those inveterate prosers who assassinate their victims with long dissertations and interminable narratives. I have suffered so much from persons of this description, that I have often thought the same fate awaited me which Sabella predicts for Horace:

> Hunc neque dira venena, nec hosticus auferet ensis,
> Nec laterum dolor, aut tussis, nec tarda podagra,
> Garrulus nunc quando consumet cunque.

Of all the comedies I have written, *The Babbling Barber* pleases me most, because it exposes that pertinacious garrulity from which I have suffered so much torture. I have been censured for avoiding people of this description, by those who do not distinguish hostility from disgust; for you may be very much disgusted with an individual, against whom you entertain no sort of hostility.

There are some who consider my satires too severe; and I confess that many of them are written with much bitterness; but I attack vices, not individuals. I am aware, indeed, that this kind of writing is generally disliked, and that the office of the satirist is a most invidious one. We see flatterers loaded with honours, while men who have the honesty and the courage to blame where censure is called for, are denounced as bad citizens. Honest satirists are hated, because their medicine is disagreeable, though salutary; fawning sycophants are applauded, because the potions they administer are pleasant, though they confirm and exasperate the disease. The former are the true friends, while they are deemed the enemies of mankind; the latter, while they appear to be the friends, are in reality

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the deadliest foes of the human race. Many persons are surprised that I should have devoted so much of my time to a species of composition which exposed me to so much ill-will; but I thought it better to do something even at this risk, than to be totally inactive; and deemed it more honourable to navigate among rocks, than to remain in port enjoying secure, but inglorious repose. It is, besides, difficult to stop short in a course in which we are carried forward by a sort of natural impulse, and to restrain, as it were, by fetters the impetuosity of genius, especially when we are urged by constant solicitations to produce something which may deserve to go down to posterity.

The general characteristic of my poems is pleasantry rather than bitterness; but there are some, I acknowledge, which deserve censure for their unmeasured severity. I have never been the first to assail any man, but I have been too acrimonious in chastising those who have given me provocation. I acknowledge this infirmity; I condemn this excess of ardour; for as a professed grammarian or musician is more blamable than another man, if he commit an error in the science he professes, so a philosopher deserves heavier censure, if he himself fail in those moral duties which he professes to inculcate. When my indignation is excited, I am unable to fix limits to it, and I am apt to run into the very errors which I condemn in others. Hence I should wish to publish a new edition of my poems, if it were only to expunge some of the invectives with which they abound; for although these invectives were extorted from me at the moment, I do not the less consider them as very material blemishes in my poetry. In vain have some philosophers taken anger under their protection, by calling it the whetstone of courage; in vain have they contended that no man can be an orator unless stimulated by

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anger, and that he who cannot feel the influence of this passion, can scarcely be called a human being. It would be sounder philosophy to say, that he can scarcely be called a human being, who surrenders himself to the influence of anger. It is a vice which I have laboured to correct, but which I have never been able entirely to subdue; for it is difficult to eradicate vices which time has rendered inveterate, as it is harder to cure a chronic weakness, than a sudden swelling of the eyes.

As to my virtues, I leave others to speak of them, since it would only be bringing my good qualities into question, if I were myself to record them. My faults are obvious to all the world, and even some of my virtues have assumed the garb of errors. Thus I am censured for being seen more frequently in the society of women than becomes a philosopher, and my fondness for plays is also considered indecorous in a man of my class. The truth is, that while I seem to despise, I cultivate literature; while I seem to pursue, I avoid pleasure; while I pull philosophical beards, I wear one of my own; and while I declaim against the vanity of the sciences, I study with intense ardour. I openly defend innocent pleasures, while I lead an austere life myself. I was formerly an assiduous frequenter of taverns, yet I was always sober; I was daily seen among gamesters, yet I never played. I sometimes tell a lie in joke, but never in serious matters. I am reserved in indifferent matters, but frank even to indiscretion in things of greater consequence. A zealous disputant in my writings, I am so placid in private life, that I have often agreed to a settlement of legal disputes, to the great dissatisfaction of my friends. With such disparities and habits, my character could not fail to be grossly misapprehended by those who, as the phrase is, measure a philosopher by his beard; but conscious of my own

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integrity, I cared little for the ignorant or malicious interpretations which were put upon my conduct. I am aware that it is often better to appear virtuous, than to be so; but I think many pursuits becoming the character of a philosopher which others suppose to be utterly inconsistent with it; and the highest praise is in my opinion due, not so much to him who shuns the pleasures of life, as to him who manfully throws himself in their way, and proves himself superior to them. So much for my moral character; something remains to be said of my religion.

It has been very generally believed that, as I have imitated Lucian in my writings, I have imbibed a good deal of Lucian's spirit, and that I am equally indifferent with regard to religious subjects. In this respect I have shared the fate of all who have the courage to oppose credulity; but though I applaud and imitate that philosopher when he makes war upon superstition, I detest and abhor him when he attacks true piety. I confess that in some minute particulars of my religious creed I differ from the common opinion; but the difference is so trivial, that, though it may have excited some murmurs, it has never armed a single opponent against me. Of the existence of a Divine Being I have never doubted; for that man must indeed be brutal and heartless, as well as utterly ignorant of natural philosophy, who can see, as the poet says,

> Cœlum nitescere, arbores frondescere,
> Segetes largiri fruges, florere omnia,
> Fontes scatere, herbis prata convestirier,

and yet doubt whether some Creator or Ruler presides over this beautiful creation. I candidly confess, however, that some years ago the reading of certain prohibited books led me to doubt the divine origin of Revelation; for as it seemed to me that men were chiefly distinguished from brutes by the

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liberty of thinking, I considered it the duty of every man to examine the grounds of the religious persuasions transmitted to him from his ancestors, to peruse prohibited books, and to doubt every thing which could not stand the test of rational inquiry. I read all the prohibited books I could procure, and this kind of reading raised many scruples in my mind. My perplexity was increased by the comments of certain modern sceptical annotators on the prophets, and also by certain Roman Catholic writers, who, to maintain the authority of their church, impugned the divinity of canonical books; for while the former openly attacked Revelation, the latter did all in their power to undermine it.

After some years, however, I happily extricated myself from the labyrinth in which the reading of these books had involved me. The book which did me as much service as the thread which extricated Ariadne, was Abadias's Truth of the Christian Religion. This volume is worth its weight in gold; the author is a most able opponent of incredulity, and a most zealous and successful champion of Revelation. Grotius, Huetius, and other strenuous defenders of Christianity contributed to bring me back into the paths of truth and peace. I had still some doubts remaining, which the study of astronomy, in which I took great delight, had suggested to me. It seemed to me that the vortices of Descartes, and the plurality of worlds, were inconsistent with the Mosaic account of the creation; but these scruples were removed by certain dexterous expounders of the Mosaic system, who have most happily reconciled the hypotheses of modern philosophers with the sacred account of the origin of the universe.

With regard to my literary pursuits, as I frequently labour under indisposition as well of mind as of body, it is from these that I derive my chief

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consolation. There is no calamity in this world which literature cannot, in some measure, contribute to alleviate; and I know not how I should have supported many of the misfortunes which have befallen me in life, if I could not have taken refuge in the haven of philosophy. My studies take a wide range, and I read select books on all subjects and sciences, except medicine and mathematics, which I do not understand. Formerly I devoted myself entirely to history and philosophy; afterwards I applied myself to the study of ancient jurisprudence; and to this succeeded my poetical studies, which I at length abandoned for my former pursuits. I might perhaps have attained some reputation in the learned world, if my literary ardour had not been checked by long and obstinate sickness. My name might perhaps have obtained some celebrity in foreign countries, if I had not written in the Danish language, which is confined within such narrow limits, that even in parts of Denmark I am scarcely known; but I am satisfied with having deserved well of my native language, and with having at any rate secured my name from oblivion among my countrymen. I am not yet old enough to sound a retreat from the field of literature; but though I shall leave poetry and pleasantry to those who have fewer years and a less exhausted imagination, I shall ever be ready, if my life be prolonged, to devote my faculties to the cause of literature, and to the benefit of my countrymen.

Copenhagen, December, 1726.

* When I abandoned the writing of poetry and satirical pieces, I resumed my former studies; for although, upon the re-establishment of the Danish theatre, I was often solicited by my friends to write

* This portion of the biography was written after an interval of eight years.

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some new plays, I adhered to the resolution I had formed not to expose myself again to the perils from which I had recently escaped; and I could only be prevailed upon to make a few alterations in some of my plays which most required correction, and to give some new pieces, which I had long had in my possession, to the company of comedians. I returned once more to a work in which I had frequently been interrupted, namely, an account of the ecclesiastical and political state of Denmark and Sweden. While I was engaged in this work, certain lampoons were published by some anonymous authors against the East India company. The East India commerce had for many years been in a declining state, and the affairs of the company indeed seemed to be threatened with ruin, unless some means could be found of giving a fresh impulse to their operations. Under these circumstances the directors had issued proposals with a view of inducing merchants of the neighbouring kingdoms to join their company. Some individuals, who looked with a jealous eye to the improvement of northern commerce, had denounced these proposals as absurd and visionary, in order to deter others from embarking their money in aid of the company's projects. I was requested to write an answer to the calumnies on the East India company; but as I know little or nothing of mercantile matters, I declined the undertaking for a long time, until I was at last prevailed upon by the solicitations of my friends to make the attempt. I published a Latin dialogue, which was afterwards translated into Danish and German at the expense of the directors; and subsequently another dialogue, in which I took a more elaborate view of the subject, and which was so favourably received by the merchants of this city, that many of them thought the author ought to be recompensed with some extraordinary reward.

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But when the question of collecting subscriptions for that purpose came to be agitated in the Merchants' Exchange, some of them prudently suggested that as I had never been a mercenary writer, the simple expression of their thanks would probably be more grateful to my feelings; and they were right, for I was quite satisfied with a verbal acknowledgment of their gratitude.

I have now to advert to the fatal period, though I look back upon it with horror, when the greater part of this noble city, with its principal churches and the whole university, was reduced to ashes. A more tragical, and, in some of its details, a more extraordinary and incredible event can scarcely be imagined. The fire commenced in the evening, in the western part of the city, and spread with great rapidity; in the first instance from the violence of the wind, and afterwards from the want of promptitude and activity in adopting the means of checking its progress; for the consternation occasioned by this unexpected calamity was so great, that for a long time the citizens remained inactive spectators of the wide-spreading conflagration. In general, although there are frequent fires every year in this city, they are got under with such dexterity that it seldom happens that an entire house is consumed. The minds of men seemed to be overwhelmed with astonishment and despair in proportion as they were wholly unprepared for such a calamity. Nothing was heard but the shrieks of women, the wailings of infants, and the sterner but not less mournful lamentations of men. There were not wanting those who added to the real horrors of the scene by false rumours of suborned incendiaries, which were readily believed and quickly circulated by the people. The firemen, and others whose duty it was to use the means of arresting the flames, partook of the general consternation. No pipes or buckets for

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the public service were to be found; terror and confusion reigned everywhere at a moment, when nothing but the utmost promptitude and presence of mind could have checked the progress of the calamity.

In the mean time the will of heaven was accomplished, and the devouring element did its work. The houses might have been supposed to be built of straw instead of stone; with such rapidity were buildings, public as well as private, consumed. One edifice after another was heard falling with a horrid crash to the ground. Those who suffered latest from the calamity sustained the greatest loss; for on the first sight of the fire many of the inhabitants, whose houses were consumed, saved a great portion of their property, their neighbours and friends having rendered them all the assistance and service in their power; but as the fire spread to the more remote parts of the city, every individual became anxious to preserve his own property, and had no time to think of assisting his neighbour. Many of the inhabitants, when they saw the flames spreading in all directions, deserted the city in despair. At length, when the fire had raged for two whole days with such fury that almost the whole of the old town of Copenhagen, and a part of the new town, were reduced to ashes, the citizens, roused from their torpor, began to compensate for their inactivity by the incredible alacrity with which they exerted themselves to save what yet remained of the city. No rank, age, or sex, was exempted from a share of the labour; the king himself, with the hereditary prince, now our august sovereign, and all the nobles of the realm, encouraging and setting an example to the people.

It then became evident how much human ability can accomplish; how much the combined force of a vast number of hands can, with the assistance of

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God, effect; for in whatever quarter these exertions were made, the fire was soon checked. There were consumed in this dreadful conflagration, the churches of the Blessed Virgin, of the Holy Ghost, of St Peter, and of St Trinity, together with the public library of the university, the astronomical tower, with the globe and instruments of the great Tycho, the senate-house, the hospital, the whole university, with the public houses of the professors, the royal institution for the support of a hundred poor scholars, four splendid colleges, namely, the Royal, the Walckendorfian, the Medicean, and the Eleusinian, and many others of less note. The consistory, where the professors held their meetings, was the only place which remained untouched amidst the surrounding ruins.

It was not till the ravages of the flames had ceased, that men began to feel the full weight of the calamity, and the whole extent of their private losses. Some, whose wealth consisted chiefly of splendid personal possessions, were reduced at once from a state of affluence to abject poverty. They who had lately kept splendid equipages, were now seen among the meanest pedestrians, or compelled to solicit the charitable donations which they once ostentatiously bestowed. In this season of general distress I can boast that my fortitude remained unshaken; for, accustomed from my cradle to the greatest frugality, I was not so disturbed by reverses of fortune as those who live for no other object than the indulgence of their appetites.

I regretted the change of residence entailed upon me by the fire, much more than the loss of property I had sustained by it. I regretted the separation from my old friends, and the loss of my old study, where I had spent so many tranquil years among my books and papers; for to me nothing is more delightful than tranquillity, and a systematic regu-

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larity in my mode of living. With me every thing was system; my business, my relaxation, my waking, my sleeping hours, my serious and my trifling pursuits, all were systematically arranged, and came round in regular succession. I spent some days in searching every corner of the part of the city saved from the flames, in order to find a convenient lodging; and I at last found a place in which, after making a few necessary arrangements, I was able in a short time to resume my former way of living.

The fire at Copenhagen is to be ranked among those signal calamities which constitute epochs in history; for this noble city, though in magnitude it is inferior to many others, yields to very few in importance; since whatever constitutes the strength, whatever contributes to the embellishment of the two kingdoms, is collected here as in a central point. The virtues of the late king were never more conspicuous than at this period of general calamity. It will never be forgotten with what solicitude he took measures to secure a supply of provisions in this season of distress; with what munificence he administered to the wants of individuals and of the people generally; with what readiness he discovered resources, affording the means of relief in every stage of our misfortunes; so that it seemed as if the calamity was reserved for this age, in order to afford a wider field of exertion to the beneficence of our sovereign.

For three weeks after the general conflagration scarcely a day passed without fires occurring in one part or other of the town. Hence fresh suspicions, and prophetic anticipations of farther calamity. Some men, staggered by what appeared to them a miraculous visitation, declared, with eyes fixed to the earth, that they expected nothing less than the destruction of the whole city; others, believing these fires to be the work of incendiaries, called aloud

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for vengeance on their heads. For my part, I was not surprised at these accidents, for I had learned from experience that these partial fires were to be expected after a great conflagration. I remember that this happened twice at Bergen in Norway, where the inhabitants, who have frequently suffered from great fires, always prepare themselves after such a visitation for a succession of minor ones.

At length, when these disasters had ceased, and councils were held to consider the means of restoring the city, it became evident that our metropolis absolutely swarms with counsellors. There were as many opinions as heads, as many architects as hands, as many senate-houses as dwellings. The whole city seemed to be transformed into a great political college; such a crop of politicians had risen from the ashes of the metropolis. There was not a sailor who did not go beyond his canvass, nor a cobbler who did not transgress his last. The dues, commonly called *priorities*, with which each house had been assessed, afforded an ample subject for discussion. Some thought the old bonds ought to be cancelled, others that they should be retained, and some proposed a middle course. I say nothing of other topics which were discussed with equal earnestness. In this sea of councils, that I might not appear to be the only man in Denmark who had no opinion to offer, I composed some dissertations in which the questions generally discussed were examined with attention; and I had the satisfaction afterwards to hear, that they had been read more than once, and approved, by the king.

When the confusion produced by this great national calamity was at an end, I returned to my studies, and in the following winter completed a work in which I had long been engaged, and which was at length published in the year 1729, under the title of 'A Description of the Kingdoms of Den-

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mark and Norway,' in a quarto volume containing 744 pages. This work was printed three times in the space of two years; for there were two Danish editions, and one in the German language. Stimulated by this success to greater efforts, I determined to write a history of Denmark from the origin of the kingdom down to the present times; a work hitherto unaccomplished, for all who had attempted this difficult undertaking had soon abandoned it in despair. But as there is a pleasure in sailing among rocks, and I am in the habit of struggling with difficulties, the failure of my predecessors rather encouraged me to try how far I could proceed in surmounting obstacles which they had considered insuperable.

I divided the work into three volumes; the first of which, containing the history of Denmark from the origin of the kingdom to the reign of Christian the Second, appeared in 1732, in a quarto of 856 pages. In this first part I carefully examined the original authorities from which Huitfeld derived his history, and by the aid of these corrected many errors, and supplied a great number of omissions. In the preface to the work I pointed out the manuscript and printed authorities, and the state papers, from which the materials were drawn; and the authors, chiefly contemporary with the events, every where cited in the margin, show with what labour the history was compiled. In the following year I published a second volume of 922 pages, nearly half of which is occupied with the reign of Christian the Fourth. Most of the materials are derived from autograph manuscripts, especially from letters of that great king written with his own hand, which add greatly to the interest and value of the work. The third volume, containing the reign of Frederick the Third, in 702 pages, besides an index to the three volumes, and a preliminary dissertation on northern

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historians, was published in the year 1735. The greatest part of this volume is derived from state-papers, letters, and other manuscripts; so that I may be said to have brought to light a history much of which was up to this period unknown to the country.

I perceived, before commencing so arduous an undertaking, that I should have occasion for a vast number of manuscripts; I was obliged therefore to search for historical documents in all parts of the kingdom; and nothing could exceed the courtesy with which the possessors of such treasures, when they were apprized of my object, afforded me an opportunity of consulting them.

While I was engaged in this historical work, a new edition of my comedies appeared, to which some were added which had not yet been published. This last edition contains twenty-five plays, and the whole work was comprised in five volumes. The names of the new pieces which have never been acted are, 1. *The Erasmus of the Mountains;* 2. *The Invisibles;* 3. *Honourable Ambition*—an attack upon title-hunters, who dignify the pursuit of empty distinctions with the name of honourable ambition; 4. *The Fortunate Shipwreck;* and 5. *The Panic.* Without entering into any detail of the plots of these pieces, I shall only observe, that they are all of a moral and philosophical character, though the titles seem to promise nothing but dramatic trifles. I have mentioned, on a former occasion, a little work which I published under the title of an "Introduction to the Law of Nature and of Nations;" and I observed, that although it was at first coldly received, it was after a few years bought with such avidity, that the first edition soon disappeared, and it was subsequently twice reprinted. The third and last edition was published in the year 1734. The work was so much enlarged in this

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edition, that I changed the title, and instead of an Introduction, ventured to call it a "System of Natural and International Law." I also annexed an index to it, which was wanting in the two former editions.

It appears from this account of my literary labours, that I did not lead an indolent life, though I am aware that I should find it difficult to vindicate myself against the charge of idleness among those who measure industry by a standard of their own, and who think nothing deserving of praise except scholastic declamations and disputations. For, as logic holds sovereign sway in certain universities, it may easily be conjectured that my studies and lucubrations were held in but little estimation by the heroes whose trophies are raised from the spoils of vanquished opponents. Whenever the advancement of literature is the question in debate, I agree with all well-wishers to the cause, but I differ from many as to the mode and means of advancing it; since the studies on which some men set the highest value, seem to me to be so many impediments in the way of sound learning.

With respect to my present occupations and mode of living, though my income is so much increased that I could live in a more elegant style than formerly, I adhere steadily to the old routine. Thus, if a friend were to visit me after an absence of twenty years, he would find no alteration in me, except an older face and a more wrinkled brow; for my general habits and my mode of living have been precisely the same for the last twenty years. I am still to be seen rambling about the town on foot without a body guard, and splashed with mud from the carriages which convey persons who were once my equals, but who have now become knights and nobles; for titles have so much increased of late in this city, that it is easier to find a nobleman

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than a gentleman. Some of my well-wishers attribute the simplicity of my way of living to avarice and penuriousness; but the truth is, that I give to the poor every year as much as I should pay to an idle footman to act as a spy upon the conduct of his master. I live in a handsome house, dress like a gentleman, frequently buy books, and, to give a final answer to all injurious surmises, I have determined to devote all my money to the public service. The plan of a public institution, which occurred to me long ago, has been submitted to those on whose judgment I rely; and they are of opinion that it will be of great advantage to the country.

I still study as much as my strength will permit, I write, read, and think, as much as is practicable in a city where so many things occur that distract the attention of a literary man; in short, amidst all the noise and bustle of this metropolis, I may be said to live in retirement. I devote two or three hours every afternoon to walking, or to the society of my friends; and the rest of the day I divide between my two great sources of enjoyment, literature and music.

I have lately published some historical and geographical instructions for the use of youth, which are read in the schools of both kingdoms, and also in the university. If this production be added to the rest of my works, the whole catalogue will be far from contemptible.

(1737.) My acceptance of the office of treasurer to the university subjected me to the remonstrances of some of my friends, who thought the transition from the character of a philosopher to that of a treasurer, as ludicrous as the metamorphosis which I formerly mentioned of a corporal into a philosopher. It was impossible, they thought, that I could find any leisure for literary pursuits, when so much of my time must be dedicated to passing

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accounts, and transacting the business of my office. I concluded, indeed, that my new duties would leave me little opportunity of cultivating more elegant pursuits, and I offered therefore certain prizes to others for the best literary productions, by way of propitiating those who considered me a deserter from the cause of literature. I persuaded myself, that after forty years' continued labour I was fairly entitled to seek an honourable retreat; and having by this mode of reasoning justified to myself my new plan of life, I applied myself for several months exclusively to books of accounts. But innate propensities, however one may attempt to repress them, are not to be subdued; and my passion for study, though it received a temporary check, could not be entirely suppressed. There remained under the ashes a few latent sparks which soon kindled a fresh flame; in short, I returned to authorship, which had become necessary to my existence, whether nature or disease of the mind had rendered it so; for as the poet says,

Tenet insatiabile multos
Scribendi cacoethes, et ægro in corde senescit.

And it is as difficult to get rid of a passion for writing, as to overcome an affection for brandy. I divided my time therefore between the duties of my office of treasurer, and the indulgence of my ruling passion for literature; and I so far succeeded in reconciling the two pursuits, that I never studied with greater effect than in the months of June and December, when I was most occupied with auditing accounts, paying and receiving bills, and transacting the business of my office. In fact, occupations which seem to be quite incompatible with literary pursuits are in the end frequently found to be favourable to them; as water, confined within dikes, rushes out with greater impetuosity when the obstacle is removed. The truth of this remark

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will be demonstrated by the number of works which I produced during the time I held the office of treasurer, and of which I shall proceed to give some account.

In a former part of this narrative I stated my intention of writing an ecclesiastical history in the Danish language. This work, which I had laid aside for some time, for the reasons just alluded to, I at length resumed, and completed in two quarto volumes, which I published under the title of *A general Ecclesiastical History, from the origin of Christianity to the Reformation of Luther*. All the copies of this work were disposed of in the space of a year, and a new edition was afterwards published at the expense of Jacob Reuss, the bookseller. That a book written on so trite and hackneyed a subject should have met with such a degree of success, may appear surprising; for we have been glutted with universal histories, and the mere mention of the title makes a literary man yawn. But several circumstances contributed to recommend this book. In the first place, it was written with perfect impartiality. The fathers are often censured in it, heretics are sometimes praised, and even the popes receive encomiums, whenever they deserve them. Secondly, as political history is necessarily mixed up with ecclesiastical, I have traced the connection of one with the other, and distinctly developed the sources of heresies, rebellion, and persecutions, instead of confining myself to a mere detail of facts, without attempting to investigate their causes, and to a dry catalogue of heresies, such as is given by some ecclesiastical annalists. Thirdly, I have devoted great attention to the explanation of the origin of ecclesiastical establishments; and I have annexed to each century of the history an account of the state of the church and

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of literature. These and other features in the work contributed to give a degree of interest and novelty to a subject in itself not very attractive. I do not state my own opinion here, but I record the opinions of others; and the success of the work shows that it would be worth while to undertake a translation of it. Certain it is, that a skilful historian may render the most hackneyed subjects interesting; with what success, for instance, have historical abridgements been written by Puffendorf, Bossuet, and others. The moderation, however, which I constantly observed, keeping a middle course between Godfred Arnold, and some ultra-rigid Lutherans, did not suit the taste of all readers. Such is the fate of all authors who, addicted to no party, aim only at historical truth.

Having completed this work, and believing from the state of my health that I should be unequal to any farther literary effort, I endeavoured to try the strength of young students by proposing certain prizes to be awarded, at stated periods of the year, to the best poetical exercises on given moral subjects. This plan was very generally approved, though there were not wanting some few persons who, shocked perhaps by its novelty, received it as the project of a vain man. The result of this scheme was the publication of five specimens, which have been in every body's hands. Other patrons of literature, encouraged by this example, have proposed similar prizes under the same conditions; and by these means the productions of many new and unknown poets, who were ignorant of their own strength, have been brought to light. These literary exercises are now discontinued, the ardour of young poets having abated, as the novelty of the scheme wore off; and it would be necessary, I apprehend, in order to bring them into vogue again, to offer

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premiums under new conditions, inviting, for instance, candidates of all ages, instead of limiting the invitation to youths.

During these contests I was not entirely idle, for I endeavoured to write a comparative biography of illustrious men, in imitation of Plutarch. To each couple of distinguished persons was prefixed a dissertation on certain virtues or vices, suggested by the circumstances of their lives; the biography followed; and a comparative view of their characters was subjoined, after the example of Plutarch. I selected chiefly Asiatic and Indian heroes, whose exploits were not generally known. It is unnecessary to describe this work more fully, as the German translation of it has made it well known to foreigners. Whether I have caught any thing of the spirit of the author whom I imitate in this work, others must decide; for my own part, when I call to mind the strength of that author's judgment, the richness of his materials, the elegance of his style, and the freedom with which he writes, I cannot venture to compare myself to so great a writer. In freedom of writing the ancients far excel the historians and biographers of the present day, when the productions of mercenary parasites have had such a baneful influence on the public taste, that histories written with the candour and independence which characterised ancient authors are denounced as satires and libels. How favourably this little work was received in the neighbouring countries, the journals of Hamburgh and Leipsic sufficiently attest. I was gratified at receiving such encomiums from impartial and competent judges, who were not known to me even by name.

While I was engaged in this work, I published a short account of my native town, Bergen in Norway. This work was considered not less entertaining than useful; for Bergen has been so frequently the

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seat of civil disturbances excited by various contending factions, that it affords abundant materials for history.

It appears from this account of my occupations, that I had taken my farewell of poetry and works of pleasantry, devoting myself only to such pursuits as were better suited to my years and station. For this reason I endeavoured to suppress altogether that celebrated work which I had composed some years before, and which is now read in several languages—I mean the *Journey to the World under Ground*. Although I was incessantly importuned by my friends to publish this work, which they considered an unobjectionable and agreeable fiction, I adhered steadily to my resolution, until at last it came to the knowledge of a bookseller that I had in my possession a manuscript of which he would be sure to make a large profit; and this man was so persevering in his solicitations that I at length yielded to them. I sold the manuscript, however, on condition that the bookseller should ascertain the opinions of the censors before publishing it, and that the name of the author should be suppressed. For, although the book contains only a few harmless jokes, and a sort of system of morality seasoned with a little pleasantry, I was unwilling, after having once devoted my attention to serious pursuits, to be again exposed to the animadversions of those morose judges who detest every thing humorous or facetious, and view a joke in the light of an offence of which no Christian should be guilty. I was afraid of being charged with the buffoonery of boyhood, at a time when I was descending into the vale of years. I dreaded the absurd and vapid misconstructions which are commonly put upon moral tales and pieces of pleasantry; misconstructions sufficiently annoying to any author, but especially so to a man advanced in years, and

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labouring under constant indisposition. The event proved that my apprehensions were well founded, for the first single printed copy which was brought hither from Germany put the whole city into commotion. Murmurs against the work, and malicious misrepresentations of its tendency, were heard in all quarters. Those who had not read it were loudest in their invectives; and the accounts given of the book were disfigured with so many falsifications, that I doubted at first whether it could be my own work which was the subject of abuse. At length, however, it fell into the hands of persons who were capable of forming a more sober judgment of its merits, and the storm gradually subsided. The majority of the public saw that there was nothing in the book to excite alarm, or to call for such intemperate abuse; I say the majority, for there is a class of persons who are always suspecting mystery, and searching for solutions in matters which are as clear as the sun at noon day. These key-searchers are most noxious insects in the republic of letters; for they seek knots in bulrushes, and attribute motives to authors for which there is no foundation except in their own confused imagination. To satisfy this mystical class of persons, I will here unreservedly give the whole key to this work.

There are many persons of both sexes in my country who speak confidently of their intercourse with fairies and supernatural beings, and who are ready to take their corporal oaths that they have been carried away by subterranean spirits to hills and mountain-caves. This foolish superstition, which suggested materials for the fiction, is ridiculed in Klimius, the hero of the tale. The characters interspersed through the work are so numerous and various, that they may be said to illustrate a complete system of ethics; hence a key would be

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required for almost every page. I confess that the way in which vices are animadverted upon may give this production the air of a satire; but as mankind generally is the object of these animadversions, it is a satire not unworthy of a philosopher. To many, on the other hand, the style may seem too feeble, cautious, and restrained; for it is necessary in works of this kind so to temper the poignancy of the satire as to combine instruction with amusement. Above all, it is necessary that authors should confine themselves within prudent limits, and cautiously abstain from directing their shafts against individuals. If this rule be observed, they may make satire, which when it is general is deprived of all its malignity, the vehicle of solid instruction, instead of an instrument of torture. Thus there is less danger in attacking mankind generally, than a whole nation, and a whole nation than a particular family; and even a particular family may be more safely made the subject of animadversion than a single individual. The "Journey to the World under Ground" is to be considered as a philosophical romance, and the characters exhibited in it will suit any nation. There is no occasion for a key therefore where the door stands open, or for a solution where there is no knot to untie. Nevertheless, for the benefit of key-searchers, I will proceed to give an explanation of the whole matter.

The story, which is only a vehicle for moral precepts and reflections, is a mere trifle. The materials, as I have just stated, are derived from a popular superstition prevalent among my countrymen. The hero of the story is supposed to be conveyed into the world under ground, where he meets with a number of surprising adventures, calculated to astonish and delight the reader. Many wonderful creatures, such as nobody ever imagined before, are

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suffered to be inhabitants of this new world; trees, for instance, are introduced endowed with the gift of speech, and musical instruments are here capable of discussing questions of philosophy or finance. The catastrophe of the story is as striking as the incidents which delight the reader in the course of the narrative; for in the space of half an hour the founder of a great monarchy is transformed into a poor bachelor of arts. Such being the nature of the work, many persons have read the "Journey to the World under Ground," as a mere book of amusement. It is true that this production is a literary trifle, but it is not altogether a useless trifle; since instruction may in this way be insinuated into many readers who would shrink from a regular didactic treatise; and as Trimalchio had his epitaph written upon a sun-dial, that every body who consulted it might read his name, so a work of pleasantry may be made the medium of instruction to those who will read nothing but books of amusement. A fisherman must bait his hook to the taste of the little fishes, if he expects to catch them; and in like manner philosophers of the greatest note have from time to time conveyed instruction through the medium of apologues and entertaining tales. Among the characters introduced into the journey, those surprising geniuses who bid fair to set rivers on fire, who perceive every thing at a glance, but penetrate nothing, hold a conspicuous place. People of quick perception, whom we are accustomed to look up to with admiration, are despised by the Potuan nation, who compare them to idle loungers, who make no progress though they are always moving. Prudent men, on the other hand, who measure their own strength, and advance with slow and cautious steps, are greatly esteemed in that nation, though with us they pass for fools or cowards. Examples of both extremes are seen in

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the countries of the Potuans and Martinians. In the former Klimius was considered an incorrigible blockhead, on account of the quickness of his perceptions; in the latter he was as much despised for the slowness of his apprehension. To Klimius, who measures virtues and vices by the ordinary standard, every thing is a paradox; but what he at first condemns, he admires and extols after deliberate reflection; so that the object of the whole work is to correct popular errors, and to distinguish the semblance of virtue and vice from the reality. Most moralists declaim lustily against avarice, debauchery, extravagance, and other vices; but this is merely serving up the same dish for the hundredth time, and repeating what every body knows by heart. Such declamations may satisfy the ear, but they never reach the heart. Those only can truly be called public instructors who cut away false and retain sound opinions; who oppose vulgar errors, and strip the mask from fictitious pretensions. Lest I should seem to speak too arrogantly here, let it be understood that I allude not to my work, but to the scope and design of my work. I say it is the duty of a moral philosopher to instruct, rather than to declaim with tragical fury against vices which the sinners themselves acknowledge. Such is the object of the "Journey to the World under Ground;" what degree of skill or dexterity the author may have shown in the execution of it, others must decide. Thus much only I will venture to say by way of admonition, that if any one, upon comparing this little production with some other celebrated moral tales, should think it tame and feeble, he should call to mind the different circumstances in which the author was placed from those of more fortunate writers. In Germany, in France, and especially in England, where no shackles are imposed upon genius, and

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where every thought that can occur to the human mind may be freely published, it is far easier to display the strength of the judgment and the imagination, than in our northern kingdoms, where the force and spirit of a writer are checked and blunted by a most rigid censorship. From this cause, even if poets and philosophers were to arise in our country capable of rivalling the poets and philosophers of England, they would scarcely come to maturity. The racer who runs to the goal amidst thorns and devious windings, must necessarily reach it later than he who has a plain, uninterrupted course before him; but this is to be imputed not to the fault of his feet, but to the course. No one can sing well under the dread of punishment for making a false note; and the mind, to exert its full powers, must be completely free from all anxiety and apprehension. In this country the chief labour of poets is to restrain the effervescence of genius, lest they should be harassed by suspicious and rigid censors; and I declare that in writing this Journey I expunged innumerable passages, not perhaps deficient in point and beauty, that I might not give offence in certain quarters, or appear to have levelled my shafts against particular individuals. With all this caution, however, I could not escape criticism; and it was from a knowledge of the temper of my countrymen, and the experience which my former works of pleasantry had given me, that I had determined to suppress this production. No encomiums or persuasions shall ever induce me to attempt again this kind of writing; I leave such enterprises to others whose shoulders are stronger than mine, and I will endeavour to efface the stain of my former industry by a virtuous abstinence from all such pursuits for the future. I took especial care not to give the slightest cause of offence to the clergy; for I have always endeavoured

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with which latter kind of jokes the writings of the Socratic philosophers abound. Many of their witty remarks have been recorded, as those, for instance, collected by Cato, called apophthegms; and it is with reference to such remarks that Cicero says, virtue may be displayed in a joke.

They who objected to my book, however, on account of its facetiousness, were the most moderate of my censors; and, as tastes cannot be disputed, I was not displeased with them. I confess too, that their admonitions were not to be despised, for they only dissuaded an old man and a valetudinarian from a species of composition which exposes the writer to much obloquy and misconstruction. But it is one of the inconsistencies of human nature, that we expose our lives to obtain glory after death, and suffer our ears to be cropped, that we may hear encomiums on our fortitude. A mind ambitious of glory is not satisfied with present fame, but pants after the applause of posterity; and this appetite for renown displays itself in trifling as well as in more important pursuits. I have before stated, that I hesitated a long time before I ventured to expose myself again to the sea of troubles from which I had escaped; but being assured by my friends that there was some merit in the work, and nothing to apprehend from its publication, I yielded to their solicitations. The light and humorous character of the book, however, was a source of anxiety to me. Some men speak the truth in a passion, and others with a smile on their countenances; both travel to the same point, though by different routes; but that which is praised as zeal in the former, is censured as levity in the other, and he who attacks vice with pleasantry is supposed to be himself indifferent to its enormity.

I was perfectly ready to pardon those who attacked me with my own weapons, and reasoned in this way:—"Here is an author who takes every

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opportunity of ridiculing rigid moralists, while he is himself perpetually moralizing; and who is constantly attacking vices to which he is himself addicted. Let him cease to write, or first correct his own faults; let him abstain from ridiculing censors, or cease to assume the censorship himself, lest he seem to arrogate a monopoly in giving moral instruction." To these objectors I answer, that nothing is more honourable than a candid confession of one's own faults; for this is the first step towards reformation, and is perfectly consistent with the character of a philosopher. In this opinion the journalists who have reviewed my works agree; for in the Hamburgh Literary Gazette for the year 1732, mention is made of me in these words—"He is as little disposed to spare his own faults as those of others," and in another place—"where he draws his own character, he presents us with a faithful picture of his good and bad qualities." He therefore who candidly confesses his own errors, and does not hesitate to accuse himself, may surely be permitted to attack the vices of mankind. As to the second objection, I have already shown that it was not my design in any of my works to erect myself into a censor, but to give to my country a few specimens in some of the more elegant branches of composition, the want of which had hitherto been objected to us as a defect in our literature. In those compositions which required to be seasoned with pleasantry and point, I have endeavoured to be facetious and pointed; the style was a necessary consequence of the subject; and they who disapprove this mode of writing ought not to object to my having resorted to it, but to my having written comedies, satires, and tales. If they object to this kind of writing, they must object to Plato, Socrates, and other philosophers of the highest reputation; and if they are afraid of proscribing what is sanctioned by such

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authority, they must surrender their objections to pleasantry and point; for a comedy without pleasantry, or a satire without point, is like a carriage without wheels. Hence they must either condemn compositions of this kind altogether, or tolerate what is essential to their existence. Writers however should carefully abstain from indulging any personal feelings of animosity by pouring unmeasured abuse upon their opponents, under the pretext of conveying moral instruction. Of this fault all who have attentively read my humorous works will acquit me; for I have constantly endeavoured to deter writers from resorting to invective and scurrility, and in my prefaces I have often condemned myself for answering attacks with too much asperity, though I was justified by the laws of self-defence and of literary warfare in repelling aggression. I may truly say, that I should be the last man among my fellow-citizens who could be induced in any writings to use the weapons of scurrility and invective—weapons which I deem unworthy, not only of a philosopher, but of a man of honour. Would that no other fault could be imputed to me, but that of having attacked the vices of mankind under fictitious names, and of having inculcated moral instruction through the medium of an amusing tale! I have many other faults to answer for, which I have on various occasions candidly acknowledged. But enough of this Journey to the World under Ground, which is the last work of this description I will ever write. It was translated, shortly after its publication, into various languages. I was myself the cause of the delay which took place before it appeared in the Danish language; for most of the Danes in the higher classes understand German, and many of the moral precepts in this work were of a paradoxical character, which I considered it inexpedient to expose to the judgment of the less

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instructed portion of the community. The common people can scarcely see with spectacles what others understand and read with advantage. The following fable may be aptly applied to this case. A mole, hearing that men used spectacles, begged her mother to buy a pair for her. "Child," said her mother, "do not covet what is unsuited to your nature; for spectacles, which are serviceable to men, are of no use to moles."

Returning, after the publication of my Journey, to more serious occupations, I meditated writing a history, but I hesitated for some time in the choice of a subject. After much deliberation, I determined to write a universal history of the Jewish nation, and I made this selection for the following reason. Among the various distinguished writers who have tried their strength in the antiquities and history of this nation, no one has deduced their annals from the earliest period down to the present times. Josephus begins with the creation of the world, and carries their history as far as the destruction of the temple. Among modern writers the most celebrated are Prideaux and Basnage. The former has only written a part of their history, namely, from the beginning of the Babylonish captivity to the time of Christ; the latter takes up the history where the former left it. As the students in Hebrew history therefore were obliged to consult three writers, I determined for their benefit to digest all that was interesting in these authors, relative to the fortunes, manners, and laws, of the Jewish people, into one volume. While I was engaged in this work, a French book made its appearance under the title of *Histoire du Peuple de Dieu*, in ten volumes quarto. I supposed at first that I had been wasting my labours; but this apprehension vanished when I came to examine the French work, for it contains nothing but the history of the Old Testament, if

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indeed it deserve the name of history, interpolated as it is with a mass of trifling digressions and fictitious orations, which have swollen it to such an enormous bulk. Unimportant occurrences are detailed with extraordinary pomp of diction; and the phrases and speeches put into the mouth of Adam and Noah are so polished and eloquent, that the patriarchs might pass for fashionable natives of Paris and Versailles. There are, besides, many other absurdities and specimens of false taste in this work, which are calculated to disgust the reader.

I confess that I am indebted for the greatest part of my history to the three writers I have alluded to. In the lives of the Patriarchs I derived much excellent information from the history compiled by a certain English society; but as I had only the two first volumes of this work, and the second volume reaches only to the time of Saul, my only guides were the sacred writers of the Old Testament, with Josephus as far as the dissolution of the kingdom of Israel, where Prideaux begins. But although in the history of the kings I was destitute of any other aid, this is far from being considered the least interesting portion of the work.

Besides the above-mentioned authors, I consulted many celebrated writers in Jewish antiquities, namely, Philo, Cunæus, Lightfoot, Vitringa, Richard Simon, Spencer, Reland, Selden, Solomon, Ben Virga, Ganzius, Bartoloccius, and other authorities, Jewish as well as Christian, with which the margin teems. Schutius, who is more copious than Basnage, and corrects many of his errors, throws great light on the history of the last age. My work was published in two volumes quarto; and as its size made the impression sufficiently expensive, I was for some time in doubt whether I would not protect myself, as is commonly done, by subscriptions. But when I reflected on the way in which this custom has

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been abused, and that the publication of books by subscription has proceeded to such an extent that it is now equivalent to a solicitation of charity, I determined to publish the book at my own risk. Authors may be excused for adopting this mode of publishing works of great extent, which demand a considerable outlay of capital; but when we see the public invited to subscribe for inconsiderable pamphlets of a few pages, the authors might as well appeal at once to the charity of the public, and beg for a few halfpence.

These were the works I wrote during the time I held the office of treasurer; so that, although I was sometimes distracted by the duties of this troublesome occupation, literature engaged the largest portion of my attention. Some persons thought that so much ardour of study was incompatible with the punctual discharge of the duties of the office; but I am not conscious of having neglected any of those duties. I applied myself to study at every interval of leisure, and I considered it the part of a philosopher to abandon my studies whenever business demanded my attention.

Most of the studies which delighted me in my youth I still preserve in my old age, except that I now prefer consulting original sources, instead of contenting myself with secondary channels of information. There are very few books which suit my taste, for I detest mediocrity as much as absolute stupidity in writing; and if I had no good books, I should prefer mere works of amusement to indifferent performances on graver subjects. Thus, when I was obliged some years ago to pass the night in a tavern situated in the suburbs, and had no books at hand, I explored the library of my landlord, which of course contained a very indifferent collection; and I selected, as the least evil, the story of Ugelspegel. As I can only endure

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books of the best character, I often feel my studious ardour checked by the want of books, since I am compelled to read again and again writers with whose productions I am familiar. There are some authors, however, whom I am never satiated with reading. Thus Grotius *de Jure Belli et Pace*, though it has long since lost the charm of novelty, is to me always a new book. This author has established the foundation of moral philosophy; and though innumerable writers have followed in the same path, none have reached his excellence; every word he writes is an axiom, every precept an oracle; and such is the majesty of his style, that he might be taken for a ancient writer of the best stamp. Among the Latin authors I consider Petronius Arbiter the greatest genius, for he seems to me to have excelled in every species of composition. The historical pieces which are found in his works are written with such perspicuity, purity, and eloquence, that it is doubtful whether even Livy deserves the preference. The poems interspersed through his book are worthy of Virgil; and his satires are so full of wit and point, that he is unquestionably the first of comic writers. Petronius is besides the only author who has given us specimens of the dialect and modes of speech prevalent among the lower orders; and the writer who can delight his readers by the unrivalled elegance and purity of his style, might be supposed to have passed his whole life among the dregs of the people, when he records the jokes which passed from guest to guest at the table of Trimalchio. The obscenities of this author, however, render his book unfit to be placed in the hands of youth.

My favourite Latin poet is Ovid. I am aware that I differ in this respect from the best judges, who give the preference to Virgil, and that my opinion is probably founded in error. It is an

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error, however, which I have never been able to overcome; for Ovid has always appeared to me an inimitable poet. He excels equally in every possible diversity of style; he is alternately severe and gay, lofty and familiar. His Metamorphoses are written in verses distinguished by their sublimity, but at the same time flowing, graceful, and so perspicuous that this poem is commonly recommended to young students. Let the verses of Ovid be compared with those of other poets, and it will be seen how elaborate and artificial are the latter, compared with the easy and natural graces of the former. The poetry of Ovid differs only from prose in the sublimity of its style. Prosody, which puts other poets upon the rack, costs him nothing; for he expresses all his ideas in verse with as much facility as if he were not restrained by metrical laws. The words follow each other in their natural order, without any of the inversion to which less felicitous versifiers are obliged to have recourse; and this peculiarity is not confined to his Art of Love, his Elegies, and his Epistles, but is equally observable in the most splendid descriptions and most highly-wrought passages of the Metamorphoses. Hence no poet has ever reached that union of sublimity and simplicity which characterises the style of Ovid. The perspicuity which some poets have by dint of great labour attained in one or two distichs, he maintains without labour through whole books. In a word, Ovid is the poet of nature, and may be said to have been fostered in the bosom of the Muses. I will not quarrel with those who give the first place to Virgil; but I am indignant at the judgment of some modern writers who speak coldly of Ovid, and consider him inferior to Horace, Lucan, and others.

Various causes may be assigned for the indifference with which Ovid is read by many persons.

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Some of these causes I pointed out in an oration which I delivered in public fifteen years ago. It is not my intention to enter at length into this subject at present, and I will only observe, that the too frequent reading of an author is calculated to produce a distaste for his productions. Ovid is in every body's hands, and his Metamorphoses especially are read again and again by poets, painters, sculptors, by the clergy, and by the laity. Hence the fate of this poet has been similar to that of music and partridges, when either of these delicacies has been too freely indulged in. In music, sweet and harmonious sounds have become unfashionable from too frequent repetition, and modern artists strive to delight their hearers by the most discordant combinations. Many of Ovid's verses are constructed with so much skill and point, that they appear to be epigrams; and yet such is his uniform perspicuity, that they have all the ease and freedom of prose.

Juvenal is so familiar to me, that I have nearly all his satires by heart. I prefer his satires to those of Horace; the latter has more vivacity, but the former greater strength, eloquence, and point. Horace pleases by the playfulness, Juvenal impresses us by the poignancy of his satire; Horace tickles the surface, Juvenal penetrates the marrow, and leaves his sting in the hearts of his readers. As a moralist Juvenal takes a wide range; Horace attacks only a few vices, and returns repeatedly to the same charge. The former adheres steadily to his argument, while the latter is perpetually digressing from it. In the first satire, Horace begins with ridiculing the inconstancy of mankind, and digresses into an attack upon avarice. In his third satire, he lashes those who see the faults of others while they are blind to their own, and then falls into a digression upon the Stoics who assert that all vices

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are of equal enormity. The same looseness in points of arrangement is observable in other satires; but I must confess, at the same time, that Horace frequently exhibits marks of a sound and discriminating judgment. As a writer he is more unequal, both in respect to style and matter, than the Tigellius whom he ridicules; and as his versification is wretchedly stiff and elaborate, he seems to me to be rather an artificial than a natural poet. Finally, as he had embraced the doctrines of Epicurus, he denies the existence of a Providence, and commends virtue merely for its utility. In point of morality therefore higher praise is due to Juvenal, who speaks with piety and decency of God and good works, and utters sentiments not unworthy of a Christian.

I prefer Plautus to Terence; and I persist in this opinion, though I may thereby incur the resentment of the shade of Horace. It is true that Terence has no faults, and that Plautus abounds with faults; but I prefer a fine face with moles, to an ordinary face without moles. Terence is only entitled to praise for the accuracy and purity of his diction; in other respects he is not to be compared with Plautus; for, whether the ingenuity of his plots, or the wit which sparkles through his comedies, be considered, Plautus is an incomparable dramatist. Hence some of his plays, as the Amphitryon, the Menechmi, the Aulularia, the Mustelaria, have been translated into French, and are ranked among the best comedies of the day. I could easily extend my observations on the merits of these two ancient dramatists; for, as I have written twenty-five plays myself, I may be supposed to be somewhat conversant with this subject; but I will merely observe, that Plautus is distinguished for the wit and vivacity which render comedies delightful, and which no subsequent writer, except Moliere, has attained.

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The plays produced in France, since the time of Moliere, are for the most part extremely vapid, and owe their success entirely to the false taste which now prevails in that country. All that a modern dramatist considers necessary to constitute a comedy, is to spin a series of languid dialogues into three or five acts; and if he does this, he fancies that he has achieved all that the art requires of him.

It has been observed by the critics, that I have imitated Martial in my epigrams, and Pliny the younger in my epistles. I do not deny this; for Martial, if we except his obscenities, is a model for epigrammatists, and Pliny the younger is an author whom I can never sufficiently read and admire. Hence, if I did not dread the resentment of Ciceronians, I should openly avow my preference of Pliny, as a writer of epistles, to Cicero. I am fully aware how enormous a heresy it is to prefer a writer of the silver age to one of the golden; I admit that it is a paradoxical opinion; I admit that I frequently turn out of the critical highway; but I follow my own judgment, which often drives me against the stream. The taste of men varies, and to me the writings of Pliny and Seneca appear to be more polished than those of Cicero. The epistolary style of Cicero is in my opinion too negligent; but what some men consider negligence, is praised as natural beauty by others, who in their turn dislike every thing that is elaborately polished, and for that reason affirm that the writers of the silver age have degenerated from the true spirit of eloquence. Such is the judgment of Quintilian, who, as Cicero censured Demetrius Phalereus among the Greek writers, attacks Seneca, and, though not by name, Pliny, as corruptors of the Roman language; as if to give point to the style of composition, were the same thing as to debase and enervate it. We are in the habit of paying a blind

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deference to the opinions of our ancestors; and the error of one man often propagates error among thousands. Let us only suppose that Pliny the younger and Seneca had written in the golden age, and Cicero in the silver; and I would lay any wager that we should form a very different judgment. Some time ago I thought of elucidating this subject in a separate treatise; but other occupations prevented me from completing my design.

I have been supposed to be entirely ignorant of the Greek language; but I read the Greek historians with sufficient facility, and I have perused twelve authors, among whom is Diodorus Siculus, from the beginning to the end. I may be said, however, never to have entered the threshold which leads to knowledge of this language, since I knew nothing of its grammar. Of the Greek poets I have only read the two first comedies of Aristophanes, but I have frequently gone over the whole Iliad of Homer. As my feeble judgment often drives me against the stream, I confess that I do not see in Homer a great deal that other men see. I admire, with the majority of critics, the diction and the genius of Homer; I recommend this poem to students as a pure fountain from which they may derive a knowledge of the Greek language; but I cannot, with many of his panegyrists, see those abundant treasures which orators, politicians, and generals, it is said, may turn to so much account. For example, I should not advise a general to imitate Hector, when in the very heat of the battle he goes home to make his domestic arrangements; nor should I recommend to orators the speeches of Nestor, which have often made me perspire. I say nothing of the enclopædia which some admirers of this poet have detected in his epics, but which I confess I have always been too dull to discover. I merely state my opinion, without wishing to dis-

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turb that of others, which I know is generally against me; for nothing is more absurd than to quarrel on account of a difference of opinion, and I only ask for myself the liberty which I willingly concede to others. Of all the Greek authors, I entertain the highest admiration for Plutarch; I am never tired of reading him, for the pages of this writer alone contain a treasure of ancient learning.

I seldom read modern authors twice. The only modern historians whom I have read more than once, are Humphrey Prideaux, Burnet, P. Daniel, and Thoyras de Rapin; the two last, who are among the most distinguished writers of the present day, I have read with critical attention. In comparing the merits of these two excellent historians, most of the critics have given the preference to Rapin. I do not exactly concur in this judgment; for in my opinion it is doubtful to which of these writers the palm should be awarded. As far as he is guided by Rymer's Fœdera, which throw great light upon the history of England, and serve to correct the errors of many writers, Rapin is superior to P. Daniel; but when Rymer fails him, he becomes as it were shipwrecked, catching at every thing that falls in his way, and following historians of doubtful authority, whom he often cites only by name, without specifying the book and page, as Camden, Backer, Du Chesne, &c. There are many material omissions in the lives of Elizabeth and James the First, which it is necessary to supply from other writers; and the greater part of the history of Charles the First, which is compiled from the collections of Rushworth, is filled with a mass of royal proclamations, acts of parliament, and letters, which no doubt afford valuable information, but which abler historians would have published in the form of an appendix to their work. P. Daniel, on the contrary, seems to have thoroughly investigated

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every thing connected with his subject, before he began his work; for he everywhere cites contemporary writers, and journals kept by distinguished actors in the events of the times. Rapin, while he gives minute details of every thing connected with the laws and political state of the country, either omits, or relates very cursorily, the wars in which England has been engaged. P. Daniel, on the other hand, pays great attention to military operations, and does not suffer the slightest skirmish to pass unnoticed. P. Daniel is so prolix in this respect, and Rapin so defective, that we might take the former for a soldier, and the latter for a monk; whereas, in point of fact, Rapin served in the army, and P. Daniel lived all his life in the college of Jesuits. Both deserve to be censured on this account; one for neglecting a subject of which he was a competent judge, and the other for being too diffuse on points of which he must have been comparatively ignorant. If Rapin had been a monk, and P. Daniel a captain in the army, the error of both would have been more excusable. I do not deny to Rapin the praise of sound judgment and impartiality; I only say, that P. Daniel's history is a work of greater effort, and that this writer commenced his undertaking with more copious materials. There can be no doubt that if, instead of a history of France, P. Daniel had written a history of England, which of all others affords the richest materials, his work would have met with a more favourable reception; for an author's reputation depends in no slight degree upon his subject. This is a point of far greater importance than many critics imagine, for the copious variety of the subject often makes amends for the sterility of the historian. Besides, the time and place in which a history is written must be taken into account; for in most countries a writer is subjected to severe restraints,

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whereas in England he is wholly unshackled, and has nothing to dread from those causes which elsewhere repress the energies of literary men.

The moral works which I have written and published prove that I have devoted no small portion of my time to the study of ethics. Other sciences strengthen, that of moral philosophy humanizes the mind, and leads us to the paths of tranquillity and happiness. There is no learning, says Cicero, comparable to that which teaches the best means of rendering life happy. Men who pass their time in the study of poetry, or of geometry, or astronomy, may be called learned; but those have a higher claim to be so distinguished, who study the art of living so as to derive the greatest enjoyment from life, and at the same time confer the greatest benefit on our fellow-creatures. Moral philosophy is our guide in the conduct of life; it sounds our virtues, expels our vices; it is the parent of civilized society, and of all the endearing relations which result from civilization; it is the source from which laws and sound education flow. Hence there is no study to which I have devoted myself with greater zeal. But I am indebted for the progress I have made in it, not so much to reading as to meditation; not so much to my converse with books, as with my own mind. I am sufficiently acquainted with the moral systems of the ancient philosophers; I frequently read Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch; but I know few of the modern writers on this subject. I prefer conveying useful precepts and admonitions through the medium of humorous dialogues and plays, to dogmatizing in the character of a severe and imperious teacher. I do not declaim against vices, and inveigh against the depravity of the age—for this seems to me to be rather the business of a preacher than a philosopher; but I endeavour to expose prevailing follies. In convincing men of

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their errors, I follow the Socratic method; I do not attack the citadel directly, but I undermine it; and by means of fiction, apologues, and comparisons, I extort an acknowledgment of the truth. Thus a friend of mine, whose intolerance I could never overcome by argument, was happily cured of his error by the story in my Journey to the World under Ground about the different shapes of eyes. I am not, however, considered a philosopher; because, knowing nothing of philosophical language, I state my opinions with simplicity and perspicuity. In these days the more obscurely a man talks or writes on the subject of philosophy, the more sublime a philosopher he is considered; and there are some persons who can scarcely be induced to read any thing except what they do not understand. Strip away the plumage in which many of our modern doctors strut, deprive them of their pomp of words, their studied elegance of philosophy; and many works which now pass for consummate productions, will appear barren, trifling, and feeble. Many writers who now astonish the public, if they had delivered their precepts in plain, unornamented diction, would have been held in far less estimation by those who think of nothing but the elegance of an author's style, and the harmony of his periods. Inflated diction, novel and affected phraseology, with the liberal use of philosophical jargon, have made many an indifferent writer pass for a philosophical oracle.

I like Montaigne for his candour, and I should like him better if he talked less of himself. I am pleased with his paradoxical opinions; by paradoxical, I mean such as, by sound, or at least plausible arguments, oppose commonly received notions. If paradoxes are destitute of this foundation in reason, there is nothing which I detest more. Thus I am disgusted with the author of the treatise *De la*

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Fausseté des Vertus Humains, who converts all human virtues into vices; ascribing humility, for instance, to pride—temperance to self-love. He laughs at human prudence, because rash actions are often successful; but such examples prove only that the event does not always correspond with the wisdom or folly of the design. A writer who broaches such paradoxes as these, and maintains them by such argument, is a rash innovator, who does not very materially differ from a fool.

The paradoxes of Montaigne, Charron, and the philosopher of Rotterdam, are for the most part proposed with judgment. Many however, which are to be found in the works of the last-mentioned writer, have given just offence to Christians; good are mixed with bad, and those which are not true are made plausible by the dexterity of the writer. It is well known how many learned pens Bayle armed against him by his doctrine of the origin of evil, and how many contests he maintained on this subject with the theological champions of the day, especially with John Le Clerc, who attacked with all his ingenuity, aided by an immense artillery of erudition, the thesis of the philosopher of Rotterdam. I will not venture to act as umpire between these two great men; to pursue the argument would indeed be only to repeat what has been urged by Le Clerc, to which nothing can be added; for the contest was maintained with such vigour, that he was obliged to retreat to original evil as a point of defence. I will only observe, that it seems to be absurd to deny the goodness of God on account of the innate frailties and vices of man. God has formed various creatures; one is more perfect than another, but each is perfect in its knd. A man is perfect *quà* man, a fly is perfect *quà* fly. If man compare himself with angels, he may lament the imperfections of his nature; if with certain animals,

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he may deplore the shortness of his life. Theophrastus is said to have accused nature, on his death-bed, for having given so long a life to stags and quails, to whom life was of no importance, and so short a one to man, to whom it was of very great importance. But if man look to the condition of worms and insects, he may erect his crest, and consider himself the most perfect of God's works. And a fly may do the same thing; for though flies are born in summer, and soon perish, either by the hand of man or winter, yet if they compare themselves with worms or moles, or those animals which, according to Aristotle, live only a single day, so that they die of old age in a few hours, they might pique themselves on their longevity and the beauty of their form, and exultingly believe that the world was created for flies alone. There is a beauty in the unequal condition of animals, as in the numerous diversities of soil, which excites our delight and wonder at the works of the creation. Whatever calamities may be incident to the lot of man, of which Bayle has drawn so appalling a picture, it is certain that there is hardly any human being who wishes to die. I have known poor old women, broken down by years and disease, who have trembled at the mere mention of death; and when I recollect this, I am surprised that Bayle's hypothesis of the two principles should have produced such a commotion. For nothing is proved from the unequal condition of created beings, unless you mean to say that flies, because they are meaner animals than lions, and lead, because it is less valuable than gold, are derived from the evil principle. To this reasoning may be aptly applied the facetious answer of a certain priest, who had asserted in the course of his sermon that all things which God had created were good. Upon descending from the pulpit, a hump-backed, who was among his hearers, came up

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to him, and said, "Look at the hump I was born with, and then tell me whether all things which God has created are good." The priest looked at the excrescence, and said, "You are well enough made for a hump-backed man." This answer was nugatory, though not altogether absurd; for if all men were born hump-backed, it would not detract from the divine goodness. God has created some animals which swim, and it was his will that these should inhabit the water; others which fly, and it was his will that these should enjoy the open air; some which creep, others which walk, some solitary, others gregarious, some wild, and others tame. Every animal is perfect in its kind. I admit too that men might have been created more perfect than they are; I admit too that they might have been created impeccable; lastly, I admit that God could of his grace effect that they should not transgress his laws. But if men were made impeccable, they would be either angels or machines; and if God by his constant intervention were to prevent them from transgressing his laws, he would cease to be a legislator; he would cease to be a judge; for to make a law, and at the same time by his absolute omnipotence to prevent man from transgressing it, implies a contradiction. As to the punishment of the wicked, it will be sufficient to answer simply with Le Clerc, that God would do nothing which is inconsistent with his justice and divine goodness; and that every judge may, without impeachment of his justice or veracity, restrain the execution of his threats, and moderate punishment. It is otherwise with respect to rewards, which once promised must be punctually bestowed.

It is well known with what acrimony, and even fury, this controversy was carried on. It was astonishing that men who had hitherto been distinguished for their moderation, should have been so

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regardless of their own character, and so unmindful of the precepts they inculcated, as to attack each other with such unmeasured invectives. They were like Pompey and Cæsar, of whom the one could bear no equal, and the other would acknowledge no superior. Le Clerc and Bayle were the last great champions of the declining republic of letters. The former was the more learned, the latter the more ingenious disputant. Both wrote immense volumes; in which Le Clerc exhibited the greatest erudition, for he was profoundly skilled in Hebrew as well as in profane languages; but Bayle showed the most consummate dexterity in composition. He might be supposed to have spent his whole life in courts; for such is the grace, such the uniform elegance of his style, that he never reminds us of the scholastic dust amidst which he was educated. I say the last great champions of the republic of letters; for although there are not wanting in our own time men distinguished for their genius and erudition, yet it cannot be denied, when we call to mind the extraordinary men which the last age produced, that literature is upon the decline. I have on a former occasion endeavoured to explain the causes of this decline, and it is not my intention to recur to the subject: I will only observe, that literary men of the present day have great reason to complain of want of patronage; and, in addition to this cause of the decline of literature, the severe censorship of books must be taken into the account, the effect of which is to check the publication of all but dull, languid, enervated productions. Books of the best character are constantly suppressed; and in those which are tolerated the noblest thoughts are expunged by the timidity, the ignorance, or the bad taste, of censors. Hence authors prefer suffering their works to be consumed in manuscript by moths and worms, to delivering them up to the tasteless shears of the

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censors. If any one should doubt the effect of this censorship, let him compare the books which have undergone this torture with those which have been published without being subjected to any previous scrutiny, and he will see how entirely they differ in character. For the *imprimatur* which is now prefixed to books, amounts to this declaration on the part of the censor; "Here is a book which contains nothing but hackneyed, common-place facts which have been repeated a thousand times before by other writers;" or, "Let this book be printed, for it contains nothing but certain undeniable common-places, and certain opinions received and established in this state." We are told of the licentiousness of certain writers, which it is necessary to restrain by these shackles; but of two evils the least should be chosen, and the advantage arising from this precautionary measure is trifling, in comparison of the inconvenience which results from it. Our northern climate produces brilliant geniuses; but they will never, in my opinion, come to maturity till these obstacles are removed, and till we get rid of the residue of the old gothic leaven. The more a nation advances in civilization, the greater is the indulgence shown towards writers. The effect of this indulgence was demonstrated in France, when in the time of Louis the Fourteenth so many historians, orators, philosophers, and poets arose, whose works are admired, though they cannot be imitated, by the writers of our country. In Sweden, since the restoration of peace, literature is beginning to recover from the depression under which it has so long laboured; but no rapid or permanent advancement can be expected so long as the ancient censorship remains, which operates like a gag upon the human intellect. It is, no doubt, necessary to take care that nothing contrary to religion and good morals should be published; but

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this precaution is indefinitely extended by the censors, who make difficulties where they do not find them, and object to every thing which deviates in any way from what is hackneyed and commonplace. I should wish the censorship to be regulated by this law:—"Let the censors take care that the republic of letters sustain no injury from commonplace or vulgar productions, or from plagiarisms." The effect of this law would be to substitute, for the mass of trash which is obtruded upon the public by so many despicable writers, a few productions written with ability, and worthy of an enlightened age.

I have been considered an enemy to the study of metaphysics, in consequence of the ironical oration in praise of metaphysics which I delivered some years ago. But by metaphysics, in that oration, I meant the mere apparatus of technical terms and subtile distinctions, which are abused by disputants in the schools, in order to entrap their adversaries. Metaphysics, in the legitimate sense, I consider a study not unworthy of a philosopher; and I often read metaphysical books, though I confess that I have not made any great advances in the science; for mysteries occur in it which, after all the investigation that can be applied to them, will ever remain mysteries. I am aware that certain divines and Christian philosophers do not find any difficulty in the matter; for they define with great confidence the nature of angels and spirits. Hence Tertullian says, that all true Christians can discover and explain the nature of God. Simonides showed greater modesty when, upon being desired by Hiero king of Sicily to describe God, he asked for a day to deliberate on the question; then for two days; and so proceeded, doubling the time required for deliberation, until Hiero, surprised at his conduct, inquired the cause of it; when Simonides replied,

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"The longer I consider this matter, the more obscure it appears to me." It were to be wished that metaphysicians had shown the modesty and caution which Newton has exhibited in his mathematical works. They would then have abstained from demonstrations *à priori*, and never have attempted to define the nature of spiritual essences. I could wish that an end were put to all questions as to the quality and form of spirits, as to the mode of their operations, and the manner in which they subsist; whether, for instance, they are propagated as it were by graffs, whether they reason apart from the body, whether their figures really resemble those which are seen in children's books, or whether they are atoms, or have extension, &c. I could wish, I say, that an end were put to all questions and disputations about things of which we know, and can know, nothing; and that men would confine their inquiries and investigations to such effects and phenomena as pass under their eyes. I could wish that philosophers would decide more modestly upon matters which are involved in impenetrable mystery, and the nature of which it as little concerns man, as it exceeds his capacity to investigate. The effect of this caution would be, that our philosophy would consist of a few certain truths, instead of a great mass of uncertain speculations.

I have devoted so little time to polemical or systematic theology, that if I were to be examined before a bench of divines, I should in all probability be rejected. But I am well acquainted with sacred history, as well Jewish as Christian; and I have examined the foundations of the Christian religion with great solicitude. As I consider it the duty of man to examine every thing connected with the ground of his religious belief, I have read heretical as well as orthodox books. I perused every thing which England has of late vomited forth

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against religion. But whatever scruples Toland, Collins, Tindal, Woolaston, and the author of the Moral Philosopher, raised in my mind, have been happily settled by others who have come forward as strenuous defenders of the Christian religion; for all the pious as well as all the irreligious productions of the day are regularly imported from England to this country. If Hobbes and Spinoza be compared with Woolaston, they will appear to be decent and temperate writers; such is the impudent audacity with which Woolaston raves against religion. The reading of books of this description may be blamed, since it indicates an appetite for novelty; but it proves at the same time an earnest and constant solicitude on the great question of salvation. We extol those who shrink from no labour or peril in order to discover some unknown country; yet we condemn those whom an anxious regard for their eternal interests induces to leave no path unexplored which may lead them to the promised land of immortality. Most men are carried, as it were by a storm, to some particular doctrine, and to this they cling as to a rock. They who adhere to their creed in this way are commonly praised, and not unfrequently enrolled in the catalogue of saints. But this is to lavish praise upon indolence, and negligence, and sloth; for he who does not think it worth while to explore the path which leads to eternal happiness, differs little from brutes. How can any man be said to believe, who has never examined the grounds of his belief? In my opinion, heresy after examination is more excusable than orthodoxy without a previous examination of the grounds of belief. For he who believes rightly without any previous doubt or examination, believes rightly by chance, and cannot therefore look forward to more than a fortuitous reward. But he who strains every nerve, and exerts every

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faculty of his mind to elicit the truth, even though his search should be unsuccessful, deserves praise for his exertions, and may expect a merciful sentence at the hands of that omnipotent judge, whose judgments are far different from those of man. It is evident therefore, that we act unjustly in condemning those who anxiously search after truth, and for that purpose read and compare both good and bad books. As reason leads us from things known to that which is unknown, I cannot account, says Cicero, for the perversity of those who would rather continue to defend, pertinaciously, erroneous opinions which they have once embraced, than exercise their reason in the investigation of truth. Upon these grounds I do not decline reading books which attack religion, while I hail the pious labours of those who successfully resolve my doubts. I am most indulgent towards those who err, condemning only those who bitterly proscribe others. There are three principles of religion to which I steadfastly adhere: first, to believe nothing which is offered to the senses; secondly, to subscribe to no doctrine which is inconsistent with the principles of the religion which I profess; and thirdly, to reject whatever impugns the divine attributes. Hence the doctrine of transubstantiation would alone drive me for ever from communion with the church of Rome, since I neither can nor ought to disbelieve the evidence of my senses; for they who oppose the deductions of common sense, make the foundation of all things uncertain and fluctuating. Hence also I eschew the doctrine of intolerance, which the first reformers urged against the Papists, since it destroys the foundation of the reformed religion; and I abhor the doctrine of absolute decrees, since it tends to make God the author of crime. Nor do I agree with those who condemn all heathens without distinction, and who consign

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Socrates, Epictetus, Aristides, and other good men, to eternal torture, because they were born out of the pale of the church. I will have no communion with those who have formed such notions of the Divine Being as to believe in such a doctrine. I believe in the perfect goodness and mercy of God, and I believe that he is the friend of mankind; others may worship, if they please, a severe and merciless judge. For the same reason, I shall never concur with those who declaim against innocent pleasures, and hold that Christian virtue consists in gloomy moroseness, and a slavish fear of God. This is in fact to convert a good and benevolent Father into a severe and envious Master; to degrade the Almighty to the level of the ever-thundering Jupiter of the heathens, or the evil principle of the Manicheans.

I differ from many persons in my definition of piety; what they call the fear of God, I define to be the love of God, united with veneration. The effect of their erroneous definition is to confound gloom with devotion. God is, in my opinion, to be worshipped with filial love, not with slavish fear. The extreme severity of those who would render the discharge of Christian duties burthensome to mankind, is especially unseasonable at a time when so many attacks are made upon religion under pretence of limiting the power of the clergy. The difficulties with which the church has to contend call for moderation, rather than severity; and this moderation at the present moment is prudently observed by the English clergy.

I pray but seldom; for I think religious worship should consist not so much in prayer, as in actions, in correct moral conduct, and obedience to the laws of God. I am the more inclined to entertain this opinion, when I see daily prayer accompanied with daily transgressions; when I find that most men pray

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regularly, that they may commit sin with greater impunity—or commit sin regularly, that they may pray with greater devotion. I am not speaking of hypocrites, for their piety is easily understood, but of the mechanical piety of those who pray and sin at stated hours. For a long time, when I saw men praying and singing hymns with a vigour and frequency proportioned to the degree and amount of their offences, I was at a loss to account for the phenomenon. But I at length detected the mystery; for I found that they considered this lip-worship a sort of compensation for or liquidation of their reckoning with God; and as it is a much easier thing to move the lips than to control the passions and subdue evil inclinations, they selected the more convenient alternative, supposing that by so doing they discharged in some sort the duty of a Christian. But there is danger lest worship of this kind meet with a measure of reward proportioned to its sincerity; and it is safer to be wholly silent, than to ask pardon for offences which we are constantly repeating. Hence Bion observed to some sailors, who were praying fervently during a storm which threatened them with shipwreck, "Be silent, lest God should hear that you are in this vessel."

I have mentioned some things which I condemn as errors in others, and some which others will condemn as errors in me. Whether the principles which I have here laid down be heretical, I leave others to determine. If they be heresies, they are the only heresies of which I am guilty; for in the fundamental articles of religion I do not recede a nail's breadth from the doctrines of the true church; and if I did, I should candidly avow it; for I think nothing baser, and more unworthy of a Christian, than dissimulation. The scruples which arise from the reading of prohibited books, I impart to my friends; and by their assistance most of my diffi-

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culties are happily solved. As life is short, and I feel the infirmities of age approaching, I deem it important to investigate every thing as thoroughly as possible, and to examine even the foundations of Revelation. I am aware that this spirit of inquiry is commonly censured; but as it arises solely from an anxious regard to my future interests, and as the judgments of God are juster than those of men, I trust that it will not be unacceptable to my heavenly judge. I lament the condition of Great Britain, and I condemn the licentiousness with which Revelation is opposed in that country, especially as the evil seems to be daily spreading; but I lament still more deeply the condition of Spain, Italy, and other countries where the liberty of expressing opinions in matters of religion is restrained, and shackles are imposed upon the human mind. The effect of these restraints is to render the established doctrines suspected, and to promote a more dangerous because a more secret infidelity. In Spain, for example, where there is so much apparent religion, there are in reality, perhaps, fewer Christians than in England; for in England all opinions are openly and fearlessly avowed, whereas in Spain men frequently propagate, by fire and the sword, a religion which they despise and detest in their hearts. Let us imagine how the conduct of such men will appear in the eyes of God, who penetrates into the inmost recesses of our hearts. Let us suppose to be placed before the throne of judgment some who have piously searched the scriptures, but who have been led into some errors by the frailty of human reason; let us suppose others to be so placed, who have either declined from indolence so arduous an inquiry, or who secretly laugh at the religion which they profess. Let us suppose, I say, these different characters to be placed before the judgment-seat of God; and it will not be difficult to

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conjecture the sentence which will be pronounced upon them. Signal examples of pretended piety have been furnished in Spain, where hypocrisy is propagated from parents to children, and where infidelity has been detected in priests, bishops, and even in holy inquisitors themselves.

I condemn no man who errs from his anxiety to effect his own salvation; but I condemn those who censure in others what they secretly approve, or who publicly profess what they secretly laugh at. To err, is a part of human frailty; but to turn God into derision, is an offence which calls aloud for vengeance. That I may not seem, however, to patronise heretics, I distinguish between those who err with bad and with good faith. If there be any who belong to the former class, I condemn them; I pity the latter, unless they have the audacity to disseminate their opinions; for then they become disturbers of the public peace, and in that light deserve to be punished. It is only in this point of view that intolerance is excusable; for whatever disturbs society ought to be put down by the laws of society. Hence states are justified in punishing murder, robbery, theft, and other crimes of this description. But there are some vices, such as avarice, ingratitude, gluttony, extravagance, &c., which are not cognizable by human tribunals, and for which man must render an account to God alone. It appears indeed from the scriptures, that idolatry was capitally punished; but this severity was peculiar to the theocracy under which the Jews lived. For the worship of the gods of the Gentiles was rebellion towards God, the king of the Jewish nation; and to serve gods of other countries was in effect to despise the civil power, which could not be done without destroying the foundations of the social compact. Hence offences comparatively trifling were severely punished, while greater of-

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fences, which were rather of a speculative than a practical character, went unpunished. Thus the Sadducees, who denied the Resurrection and the existence of spirits, were tolerated, but others capitally punished for the slightest neglect of religious ceremonies. The only persons whom I exclude from the benefit of toleration, are those who avow principles opposed to the civil power. I exclude Roman Catholics, because they are themselves intolerant, and because they endeavour by force and fraud to propagate their opinions. I exclude dissenting fanatics, because they refuse to take the oath of allegiance, and, under the pretence of conscientious scruples, make religion a cloak for their contumacy.

I have never studied mathematics, though I am fond of astronomy, and have great pleasure in reading all the books on that subject which I can understand. I have hesitated between the systems of Descartes and Newton, without venturing to decide positively in favour of either. I confess that I cannot consent to give up the vortices of Descartes; for his hypothesis is so easy and intelligible, that even children and old women acknowledge that some such effect must be produced by the rotatory motion of the sun. On the other hand, unlearned persons look upon the attraction of Newton as a sort of magic power, and cannot easily comprehend how the sun, which sends forth such floods of light, can at the same time attract the planets; the two forces supposed to exist in that body seeming to be as incompatible, and as opposite to nature, as the simultaneous actions of inspiration and respiration would be. As the hypothesis of Descartes, therefore, is far more intelligible than Newton's, and as the circular motion of the planets cannot be ascribed to a more probable cause, I am inclined to adhere to this hypothesis; and if there be any phenomena,

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such as the elliptical motion of the comets, which seem to destroy it, I should refer them to some occult causes or qualities peculiar to comets. I shall not enlarge on this subject, as I confess that I am not a competent judge of it; but I will only add, that the anomalous motion of comets is as much opposed to Newton's system, as to the vortices of Descartes. For if it be a question, how comets proceed in straight lines, while other bodies revolve with a circular motion round the sun, the Newtonians will be perplexed with another equally difficult question, namely—how a comet, when it reaches the vicinity of the sun, can reascend and retrace its path. For if the sun attract bodies, it would by virtue of its attractive power entirely absorb a comet on its near approach. Indeed, Newton foresaw the objections which might be urged against the principle of gravitation, and he has therefore left every one at liberty to use the term either of attraction or impulsion, although the result is not affected by the term which may be employed. Too much praise, however, cannot be given to the modesty of this most sagacious philosopher, who, while he saw farther than any of his contemporaries, candidly acknowledges his ignorance of those mysteries which are beyond the reach of the human understanding. The mathematicians who succeeded Newton have borrowed largely from his discoveries, and many of the errors of Descartes have since his time been generally exploded.

The studies to which a natural propensity urges me to devote myself, are frequently interrupted by the duties of my office of treasurer. I am frequently obliged, in my official capacity, to consume whole days in constructing tables, auditing accounts, and writing letters of business. My farm also (for some years ago I purchased a farm in Zeeland, called Brorup) employs some portion of my time. The

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little affairs and occasional complaints of the peasants in my neighbourhood serve rather to amuse than to distract my mind. I take as much care as possible not to be engaged in any of those litigations which frequently accompany the possession of landed property; and if any disputes arise, I endeavour to settle them by an amicable composition. But a spirit of concession may easily be carried too far in the country, and rustics will be sure to impose upon too acquiescing a disposition. Hence I observe a different demeanour in town and in the country; in town I live with philosophical simplicity and carelessness, but I put on my coat of mail when I go into the country; and when I turn my back on the custom-house at the western gate of the city, I lay aside my philosophy till my return. From the time I became a landholder, I have acted two characters; that of a philosopher in town, and of an armed soldier in the country. In town I repel my adversaries with argument, in the country with my buckler. I tried at first to allay animosities by courteous and gentle manners, and to restore peace by mild expostulations and entreaties; but, experience having taught me that rustics are only exasperated by this method of proceeding, I find Justinian a better guide than Seneca, and law a more formidable weapon than philosophy. My neighbours at first took me for a man entirely immersed in literary pursuits, and a fit subject therefore to be gulled and laughed at with impunity. Accordingly they proceeded to make experiments upon my temper and my patience, by blandishments, threats, and all the other artifices in which rustics excel; but finding that I was tolerably armed against assaults of this kind, and that I was vigilantly attentive to my pecuniary interests, they thought proper to desist, and to leave me to the enjoyment of my repose. In spite of all the con-

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varieties which are incident to this mode of life, in spite of bad harvests, distempered cattle, and other disasters of this kind, there are many pleasures to counterbalance them; and, upon the whole, I can conceive nothing more delightful, more honourable, or more worthy of a philosopher, than agricultural pursuits; the simple manners and unrestrained conversation of the peasantry afford me more entertainment, and richer materials for reflection, than the studied discourses of philosophers. When I took possession of my farm, it was in a state of complete desolation; and now every thing around me is flourishing. I have no slight satisfaction therefore in comparing its present with its former state; I rejoice that I have in some measure discharged the duty of a good citizen; that while so many farms have been suffered to go to decay, I have the merit of restoring and creating, where others have dilapidated and destroyed; and that I have improved the condition of the peasantry, who formerly suffered under the most galling oppression.

I begin to be sensible of some of the infirmities which commonly accompany old age. The fearlessness which once distinguished my character has been succeeded by timidity, and my love of society by a fondness for solitude. Cheerfulness has given place to austerity, as wrinkles have furrowed the smoothness of my brow. The amusements in which I formerly delighted, have now lost much of their attraction; passionately fond as I once was of music, I now frequently hear the finest concerts with indifference; and, what is an infallible mark of the approach of old age, I take more pleasure in trifling than in learned conversation. Thus, I yawn if any body talks to me of affairs of great importance, such as the war between the Turks and the Persians, the triple alliance, the pragmatic

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sanction, or the election of an emperor or a pope; while I take a lively interest in trifling gossip about the quarrels of my neighbours, births, christenings, weddings, and such like occurrences. Moreover, my friends remark, as an unquestionable indication of my senility, that I am much affected by unfavourable intelligence of any kind, such as loss of money, threats on the part of my enemies, &c., and that every event out of the ordinary course makes me tremble as if I beheld a comet. In fact, many persons have reproached me with this weakness in the days of my youth and manhood, and have concluded from it that I was but a mere nominal philosopher. I confess, indeed, that I have never been a practical philosopher; and I have on more than one occasion candidly declared, that I am subject to impulses of passion, perturbation of mind, and other failings which I have never been able to overcome. I am not ignorant that the pangs of grief, and the shafts of fortune, may be driven away and despised by the aid of philosophy; and I frequently read therefore the works of philosophers, in which I find an abundance of arguments and illustrations, but I am nevertheless unable to make my philosophy available in controlling the sudden impulses of nature. Whatever philosophers may say to the contrary, such impulses are not under our control, and it is idle to talk of eradicating human feelings; for man is not formed of marble or hewn out of oak. I am frequently attacked by sudden fits of passion, grief, or fear, which subside as soon as my blood cools, and my spirits are restored to a just equilibrium. Paroxysms of passion cannot be checked by reading Cicero or Seneca; and indeed they are rather to be regarded as salutary outlets for our ill-humours, which are thus prevented from rankling and corrupting the moral system. When reason and reflection resume their sway, I

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laugh at my folly; and it is at such junctures that philosophy may be beneficially called to our aid, for it strengthens the mind against future assaults, and enables us, if not wholly to overcome our passions, to guard against being wholly subdued by them. Some of my failings, which I have noticed in a former part of this work, have yielded to the influence of time, while others have sprung up in their place; so that the destruction of one fault seems to have been the generation of another. In most essential respects, however, my good and bad qualities have remained unaltered.

I observed that I was formerly courageous, but that I have now become timid; yet upon some occasions I exhibit no want of that intrepidity which once distinguished me, for I meet the attacks of my adversaries with sufficient vigour. The only class of persons I am afraid of encountering are saints, who, covered with the defensive armour of religion, challenge me to combat. I am so much alarmed at the sight of these persons, that I instantly betake myself to flight; having learnt from experience, that they can only be met under the greatest disadvantages, and that there is no animosity so bitter, or hatred so pertinacious, as that of religious antagonists.

I have always detested hypocrisy, and in fact my candour has frequently been carried to an indiscreet length. It has been thought that I have flattered the fair sex in my writings; but if what I have written in favour of the sex be fairly examined, it will be found that I have acted rather as an impartial judge and defender, than as a flatterer of women. I have shown that many of the faults which are said to be inherent in the fair sex, do not arise from nature. I have shown that we should see many women distinguished by manly virtues, had they received a manly education from their

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infancy. I have shown that many of the rights which men arrogate to themselves, depend rather upon prescription than upon natural law. I have shown that qualities should be regarded rather than names; and that women ought not, from the mere circumstance of their birth, to be excluded from all occupations which demand the exercise of intellect; since it has been proved by many striking examples, that they possess great versatility of talent, and are deficient in none of the qualifications which are essential to the conduct of public as well as private affairs. I do not flatter women therefore; but, without regard to distinctions of name or birth, I weigh the pretensions of both sexes in the same balance. If, for instance, I perceived that a sister was more worthy of my confidence than her brother, I should not hesitate to make her the depositary of a secret in preference to him; if she discovered greater dexterity in the management of business, I should act upon the same principle. He cannot be said to flatter, who, without being influenced by prejudice or passion, ascribes to all the merit to which he deems them fairly entitled. But partiality may justly be imputed to those who, while they pander to their own and other men's vices, are perpetually assailing the weaker sex in their conversation and writings. The majority of mankind embrace the victorious cause—I prefer espousing the vanquished and oppressed side; the former is the safer, the latter the more honourable course. It is with this view alone that I defend the cause of women, to whose chains I have never slavishly surrendered myself, as my solitary nights and continued celibacy sufficiently attest. My friends often urge me to marry; but I generally parry their importunities, either by alleging my ignorance of experimental philosophy, or my declining years. I am in the habit of reasoning in this way. Before I

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reached my fortieth year I was not in a condition to marry, on account of the narrowness of my circumstances; and after that age I was afraid of marrying. Formerly I feared the frowns, now I fear the cornucopia, of Fortune; a common case with most of my countrymen, whose poverty prevents them from marrying till the decline of life. If I were to change my condition at my age, instead of leading my wife to the altar, I should be led to the altar by my wife. Such are the excuses which I commonly assign for my celibacy; but the chief cause of it is a too delicate and susceptible mind. I dread to encounter the domestic cares, and the thousand minor inconveniencies which other men treat lightly, but which I should be utterly unable to endure. Besides, if I were to attempt to pay my court to a female, I should candidly avow all my failings, which, though trifling when separately considered, are in the aggregate sufficient to deter any woman from entering into a matrimonial engagement with me. I was asked not long since by a married lady, whether I had made a vow of perpetual celibacy? Upon which I replied, that I had made no vow of the sort, but that there were many circumstances which tended to keep me unmarried, and many difficulties and objections which occurred to my mind, whenever I felt desirous of altering my condition. Upon this the lady observed, that whatever might be the inconveniencies attending the married state, they were compensated by innumerable advantages; that a sensible and affectionate wife was a sovereign remedy for all the ills of this life; and that, as to domestic cares, such a woman would be ready not merely to participate in them, but to take the whole burthen of them upon herself. She then proceeded to enlarge upon the delights of the married state, which she declared to be so numerous and exquisite as to throw any little

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inconveniencies I might have apprehended completely into the shade. To this I replied, that a man in the sixtieth year of his age felt all the inconveniencies and none of the delights of matrimony. Upon her desiring me to state distinctly what were the chief inconveniencies I dreaded, I asked her whether she ever snored at night. I snore immoderately, said the lady. Then, madam, said I, that alone is a fault for which I should turn you out of the house. Upon this I took my leave, while the lady was ready to burst her tucker with laughing.

I have hinted at the reasons why I remain unmarried, and shall probably continue so, to whatever period my life may be prolonged. I content myself with planting trees, that I may contribute something towards the earth's increase; and as I am not likely to have any descendants of my own, I write books for the benefit of the descendants of other men. All things cannot be done by all men; I respect the citizen who can make books for posterity, and at the same time contribute to make posterity for his books; there is merit in either achievement, but I do not lay claim to both of them. I have stated the reasons why I lead a solitary life, that my friends may cease to persecute me upon that score; and if I were to avow the reasons which influence my conduct in many other particulars, for which I am frequently censured, it would be admitted that my conduct is the result of sound reflection, and not of caprice. Thus I amuse myself with writing in a facetious vein, when my mind is oppressed with sorrow, and requires this kind of intellectual relaxation as a medicine. I deny myself luxuries, because a simple mode of living is most favourable to my health. I live in solitude and retirement, because tranquillity is, as it were, the nourishment on which my mind thrives; and I am never less alone than when I live in

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solitude. I keep no servant, because I look upon a servant as a domestic nuisance, and a most inconvenient article of household furniture. I walk on foot to preserve my health; and I remain unmarried because I foresee that I could ill endure the troubles which attend the married state. A married man, in addition to his own misfortunes, has those of his wife and family to torment him; nor can he ever separate himself even in thought from the woman to whom he is agglutinated by the ties of matrimony.

It may seem singular that a man so much attached as I am to tranquillity and retirement, should prefer the town to the country; but it is this love of tranquillity which induces me to reside chiefly in the metropolis. In villages and small towns we are annoyed by petty contentions, gossiping reports, and other inconveniencies, to which we are less exposed in large cities, where men are for the most part too much occupied with their own business to interfere with the concerns of others. In the country, want of employment is the cause of perpetual bickerings and contentions; as stagnant water soon becomes turbid and offensive. I have experienced this whenever I have resided for a short time at my farm, where I am always obliged to live with far greater circumspection and restraint than in the metropolis.

As I have always been a warm advocate of toleration, I have incurred the displeasure of certain over-zealous divines, who avow principles of intolerance which even the more moderate among Roman Catholics would be afraid of maintaining. They suspect me of having leaned of late towards certain persons whose private opinions of religious ceremonies are believed to be sceptical; but I have even from my earliest years considered toleration a true Christian virtue, conformable to the doctrines

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of Christ, and to the principles of the Protestant religion. This is manifest from the precepts which are to be found in my writings published twenty years; and to recede from these principles is, in my opinion, to destroy the foundations of the reformed religion, and to expose ourselves to the same weapons which we formerly used against the Roman Catholics. Besides, the moral doctrines of Christ, the excellence of which even the bitterest enemies of religion admit, and against which they do not dare to open their mouths, would be rendered unjust, and inferior to the doctrines of heathen philosophers, if the expression 'make to enter' were literally interpreted.

Some persons have pointed out passages in my writings calculated to provoke the displeasure of the clergy, and have therefore supposed that I was not well disposed towards that body. But they are mistaken; for I regard priests, as preachers of the divine word, with the reverence which is due to them. If they are good men, I consider them worthy of respect and love; and if they are not so, I nevertheless pay them respect in public on account of the sanctity of their office. In this respect I follow the example of the old woman who addressed a priest as he descended from his pulpit in these words, 'I thank you for the sound and pious advice you have given me, and God grant that your life may correspond with your doctrine!' I am far from concurring with those who inveigh against the clergy with noisy declamation, and contend that their revenues should be diminished. In my opinion, they ought to have the means of living with decency and comfort; for care should be taken that the narrowness of their incomes do not expose them, like mendicant friars, to the ridicule of mankind, or drive them to other sordid occupations inconsistent with their sacred office. Needy priests, living upon the contributions of their flocks, cannot discharge

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their functions with manliness and dignity. It is a mistake, therefore, to suppose that I am no friend to priests; I am an enemy to those who, under the pretext of sanctity, endeavour to stigmatise the reputation of good men.

I have been censured also for having spoken with too little respect of academies and learned societies, especially as I am myself a member of the university, and may seem therefore, if there were any foundation for the charge, to have defiled my own nest. But my disputes with other professors have related not to literary studies, but to the method of pursuing those studies. In my Journey to the World under Ground, I have compared scholastic disputations to the ancient games of the Circus; I have censured some academical customs which excite the laughter of those who witness them; and I have ridiculed certain difficult trifles and useless studies, which are held in high estimation in some of our public schools. I do not mean, however, by this criticism to attack literature, but the faults of some men of letters. In fact, the criticism itself demonstrates that I have a genuine respect for literature, and that I am anxious to vindicate it from the ridicule and contempt to which it may be exposed by ludicrous academical customs and preposterous courses of study. The absurdity of some of the statutes of the university is easily accounted for; since they were framed in the middle ages, when the grossest ignorance and the most barbarous usages prevailed. There is abundance of noise and declamation in our schools; but when all is done, nothing is accomplished. Hence I have often wished to see a reform of the present system, corresponding with the intelligence of the age. I could wish to substitute silence for noisy declamation, and meditation for loquacity; I could wish to substitute for the present teachers and lecturers,

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respondents whose duty it might be, not to expound theses selected by themselves, but to resolve such doubts and difficulties as might be proposed to them by the students. Such a plan would be attended with two advantages; students would obtain the information which they wished to acquire; and none could undertake the office of teaching, except those who had attained a perfect knowledge of the science they professed.

It would have been well if at the time of the revival of letters some literary Luther had arisen, who might have rendered the same service to literature as that great reformer did to religion, by purifying it from the leaven of the middle ages, and applying a remedy to the evils which the darkness of that period introduced. The roots of those evils have never been eradicated, though a few of the branches have been lopped away; many abuses require reform in our universities, in order to restore literature to a healthy and flourishing condition. The necessity of this reform is demonstrated by the recent establishment of schools in France and England upon principles entirely opposed to the statutes of those universities, in which the students are compelled to pay a blind deference to established absurdities, where intellect and taste are alike depraved, and where little is taught except that which every man of vigorous understanding will soon see the necessity of unlearning. Students who flock to our universities, as the established marts for literature and science, return with a certain portion of the commodities which are sold there; they become perhaps more learned, but not better or more enlightened men; on the contrary, they become confirmed in all those prejudices, the absence of which ought to distinguish men of letters from the vulgar. The first object of education, conducted upon sound principles, should be to get

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rid of prejudices. The brains of a student should be cleared of these excrescences, till they become perfectly smooth tablets; no learning should be intrusted to them till they acquire this level superficies; for then, and not till then, are they capable of receiving salutary impressions. Unless this precaution be taken, students will never believe any thing, except what is conformable to the particular views of the sects in whose opinions they have been taught to place implicit reliance.

The pleasantry in which I have occasionally indulged, in noticing the errors of men of letters, cannot be justly laid to my charge as a proof of my contempt for literature. My unwearied labours, the number of works I have published, and the rewards by which I have endeavoured to stimulate the talents and the diligence of others, prove rather my zeal than my indifference in the cause of literature. It is a mistake to suppose, that I have written for the sake of gain; for I have had many opportunities of realizing far greater profits with much less labour; and the care with which my works are elaborated, sufficiently proves that gain was not the object of the writer. I have neglected many opportunities of making money, because I believed that it would interfere with my literary pursuits to avail myself of them; for I have always considered every moment of my life lost, which was not devoted to literature.

Yet with all this ardour of study I seem to myself to have accomplished nothing; and when I compare my labours with those of some other learned athletes, I blush at my own indolence and inactivity. My studious ardour is checked by constant bodily diseases, and especially by head-ache; a complaint sufficiently annoying to all men, but especially inconvenient to a literary man. Diseases are of course inevitable, and there will always be a certain

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quantity of them distributed among mankind; but if I had the power of allotting them to particular patients, I would give the head-ache exclusively to women, and those whose occupations do not require the agency of the brains; or to dull authors, who annoy us with interminable nonsense. If I have done any service to the cause of the national literature, it is that I have uniformly laboured to overcome the taste for pedantry and common-place. Conversant with productions of French and English writers, I have endeavoured not so much to write learnedly, as to express my meaning with neatness and perspicuity; and I may say without arrogance, that I am the first of my countrymen who has written tolerably well-digested histories, instead of dry, confused annals; and who has revived in the north the study of moral philosophy, which may be said to have been almost buried in the grave. There are some persons who, while they are ready to acknowledge my merit to this extent, and to commend my industry, are astonished that a man of my regular habits, who is almost constantly sick, and fast verging to the decline of life, should still delight in what they call puerilities, and amuse himself by writing facetious poems and plays. But I have been obliged to have recourse to this kind of composition, as a remedy for my bodily and mental diseases; and it is a remedy which I should be disposed to recommend to others. I was once formally reprimanded by a dull author for this propensity. "How," said he, "can you, who conduct yourself in private life with such decent gravity, give way to so indecorous a vein of pleasantry in your writings?" And how, replied I, can you, who conduct yourself in so comical a manner, write books which produce so tragical an effect upon your readers?

If my bodily infirmities, however, have some-

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times interrupted my literary pursuits, they have also in some measure contributed to promote them; for the maladies with which I am constantly tormented compel me to lead a solitary life; so that in a populous metropolis, amidst the strife of the bar and the seductions of the court, amidst the noise of drums and trumpets, and the thousand inconveniencies and distractions which are considered inevitable in large cities, I still contrive to live, as it were, in retirement. I do not pay my court to the dignitaries of the state, for I am contented with my condition, and care nothing for the empty titles and distinctions which other men pursue with so much eagerness. If the dignitaries of the state could confer health of body, as well as titles, distinctions, and emoluments, I should be a punctual petitioner in their antechambers. But as they cannot give this, I remain at home, paying my court to literature alone. This peculiarity in my character and conduct I am supposed to have borrowed from the English. I have been frequently told in England, that I looked like an Englishman; but my character is much more decidedly English than my countenance. I was pleased with the English nation, and all the Englishmen with whom I had any intercourse were pleased with me; for my disposition and manners accorded singularly with theirs, and I was in the habit of declaring all the opinions which occurred to me with the characteristic frankness of that people.

I continue to observe the same sobriety in my old age, to which I have been accustomed in my youth, regardless of the advice of friends, who are perpetually exhorting me to try a more generous mode of living. They suppose that a man who refrains from the pleasures of the table, denies himself the comforts of life; and they are therefore constantly inflicting upon me those maxims of northern phi-

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losophy which inculcate the propriety of eating and drinking to excess. Their mode of taking care of the body, I consider the most certain method of destroying it; for experience has convinced me, that the body is much more enervated by indulgence than by abstinence. My own case furnishes an instance of the truth of this position. Forty years ago my constitution was so feeble, that my friends prophesied my speedy dissolution, if I did not double the quantity of food I allowed myself. Most of those declaimers, however, who indulged their appetites as they advised me to indulge mine, have been long since dead; while I continue to live, observing the same frugal habits which they supposed to be hurrying me to the grave. The best rule a man can follow in his mode of living is to be moderate; he should eat to live, not live to eat. Abstinence may be carried to excess as well as indulgence; and the niggard who concedes nothing to his appetite, may err as much as the glutton who can refuse it nothing. As much food and drink should be taken as may refresh without oppressing the powers of the body, and a similar moderation should be observed in exercising both the body and the mind: for human life, as Cato says, is like iron; it is worn away by exercise, and without exercise it is destroyed by rust.

Some persons laugh at me for accumulating money, especially as I am a single man, and shall in all probability die without children. I am not displeased at their merriment, for I often laugh at myself for the same reason. I have known what it is both to be poor and rich. When I had no money, I had no care; I am often tormented by fears and anxieties, now that I am rich; and as I cannot venture to indulge in luxuries, I feel all the inconvenience, without enjoying any of the pleasures, which wealth can purchase. It would seem, therefore,

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that people are right in laughing at me; yet if I were to make any one of the laughers my heir, I question whether he would refuse to accept my money on account of the cares and anxieties inseparable from its possession. The mere prospect of a legacy would convert these facetious persons into so many gaping cormorants and parasites, ready and eager to perform the meanest offices. It is evident, therefore, that the censures, admonitions, and jokes, which are directed against me on this score, arise merely from envy. Men often affect a contempt for the good things beyond their reach; as the fox in the fable despised the grapes which made his chaps water. They who laugh at me for the attention I give to my pecuniary concerns, laugh at a foible which affects the majority of mankind, and from which they are probably not exempt themselves. Spendthrifts and prodigals, indeed, have a better right to laugh at economy; but at what an expense is the right purchased, and how bitter is the retaliation which prudent men may make upon them? For if avarice is folly, prodigality deserves the name of madness. It is certainly not easy to understand how old men upon the brink of the grave can take delight in accumulating money which can be of no use to themselves; for what can be more absurd than to feel greater anxiety about provisions for a journey, in proportion as less of the journey remains to be accomplished? Yet, absurd as this propensity may appear, it is more difficult to understand how poor men can squander the scanty means they possess, by a prudent management of which they might protect themselves from want and ignominy in their old age. The covetous man plants trees that will benefit posterity, though they cannot contribute to his own enjoyment; but the prodigal cuts down his trees, that he may deprive himself and his posterity of their fruits; he dines

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sumptuously, that he may sup in wretchedness, and ultimately die of want. The penuriousness of the rich may excite our ridicule, but the extravagance of the poor is a more deplorable infatuation; both are diseases; the rich miser's complaint is a low fever, the poor prodigal's is raving madness.

Every kind of excess is so immediately injurious to my constitution, that I am obliged to be moderate and abstemious in my mode of living. Hence I dine in a way that admits of my taking a slight supper; and I walk on foot, that I may preserve my health by exercise. To make money honestly, and to keep what you have acquired, is the test of a prudent man, and the duty of a good citizen. I admit that this provident conduct is more laudable in a father than in an unmarried man. But what then? Suppose I should take it into my head to marry; for a sudden impulse of this kind often seizes upon my countrymen, and vanquishes all their previous resolutions in a moment. I say nothing of other contingencies to which human life is subject, and which impress upon us the expediency of providing for the future. Besides, as I have endeavoured to instruct my countrymen not less by my life than by my writings, it behoves me to add example to precept. If I had been born in Spain, where the people deny themselves the comforts of life, and live upon air, I should have urged my countrymen, both by exhortation and example, to live generously. But in the north, where men are devoted to the pleasures of the table, it is necessary to hold out different precepts and a different example. If it be absurd to live providently, the folly is as great in a father as in an unmarried man; for the ground upon which fathers defend their parsimony, namely, that they may leave enough to provide for the children that survive them, is altogether nugatory in the eyes of a philosopher, since

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death dissolves all ties. Besides, no mention is made of things terrestrial in the life to come, and all trifling considerations of this kind will cease in paradise, unless our ideas of heaven be as carnal as those which the vulgar are apt to entertain.

It may be supposed, from my having dwelt so long on the subject of my wealth, that I am a rich man; but I am neither rich nor poor. My means are so much augmented, that I could live more expensively than I am accustomed to live; and this was the great object of my wishes. He who suffers no opportunity of making money honourably and lawfully to escape him, and who by so doing provides against future emergencies, acts wisely and judiciously. He who is not content with this measure of prosperity, but who accumulates wealth merely for the sake of accumulating, is not, in my opinion, a prudent economist, but a sordid miser. May God deliver me from so foul a disease! The wealth I possess has been acquired by labour, and preserved by temperance; and I will make an honourable use of what I have fairly acquired. A part of it I shall expend in embellishing my farm, and the remainder I shall devote to the service of the public; so that I shall appear to consider posterity not so much the possessor as the steward of the property which I hold in trust for their benefit.

I labour under the same bodily weakness, and the same diseases, which afflicted me in my youth; but I can now only oppose firmness of mind to the complaints which, in my younger days, I endeavoured to subdue by abstinence, labour, and perpetual exercise. The mind and the body mutually support each other, and when the body is disordered, the patient should increase his exertions to preserve his mind in a healthy state, and prevent it, if possible, from participating in the disease.

I feel that I am always ill, yet I cannot discover

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the nature of my complaint. My own opinion is, that there is no better remedy for my malady than the Peruvian bark; but as my physicians object to it, and I know nothing myself of the properties of this bark, I cannot venture upon the daily use of it. If the Peruvian bark had the power of absorbing acidities, I should not hesitate to take a dose of it every day; but if it only checks the acid fermentation I consider it not only useless, but pernicious; for when medicines check, but do not remove, the cause of disease, the malady is sure to return with increased violence. I go on, therefore, continually ailing, and protracting life; and perhaps my life is protracted because I am continually ailing. For my ill health restrains me to a frugal diet, which protracts my existence, however wretched existence under such circumstances may be deemed. My taste for food is like my constitution, for both are peculiar. Thus I dislike what other men consider most palatable, and what is injurious to the health of other men is favourable to mine; for, however paradoxical it may appear, my health is never better than when I labour under obstruction of the bowels, or when I am troubled with insomnolence, and pass the nights in watching.

I am as much attached to books as ever, but I profit little by them, for I soon forget almost every thing I now read. My memory is a sieve through which all things, and especially historical facts, escape. I forget words and technical terms, and I am sometimes at a loss for my own name. In some studies, however, which are not affairs of memory, I still make some progress, not so much by reading as by meditation. I study myself; I study mankind; I endeavour to make myself acquainted with the character of nations as well as individuals; and as in my foreign travels I have passed my time more among men than in libraries, I persuade myself

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that I have formed tolerably accurate opinions of the peculiar genius and character of most of the nations of Europe. I have often been pressed to publish the result of my observations in the usual form of a book of travels. This I have uniformly declined as too difficult and hazardous an undertaking; but, that I may not seem to disregard altogether the solicitations of my friends, I will in this place introduce a few remarks on the different people whose countries I have visited, namely, the French, English, Italians, Germans, and Dutch.

I approve of the polite and sociable manners of the French, yet I should like this people better if they were less sociable; for as moroseness provokes our bile, so too much urbanity may excite disgust. The temperament of the French is sanguine; their passions are easily roused, and as easily appeased; their friendships are quickly formed, and as speedily dissolved. Neither love nor hatred is of long duration in the breast of a Frenchman, and Frenchmen seldom deserve therefore either our esteem or our detestation. Their manners are frank and open to a fault; they are not deficient in liberality, compassion, and other excellent qualities, approaching to the heroic character; but they are governed rather by impulse than reflection, and seem to do every thing as it were by sudden fits and starts. The same observation is applicable to their vices. Writers frequently ascribe to the whole French nation vices which are peculiar to the Parisians; an error which arises from their intercourse with the people being exclusively confined to the inhabitants of the capital. In this country the common people believe that the complexions of Frenchmen are extremely dark, because the Frenchmen they see are chiefly sailors from the south of France, whose naturally dark complexions are rendered still more adust by constant exposure to sun and wind. These men, how-

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ever, differ totally, both in complexion and manners, from the Parisians; and the follies which foreigners are in the habit of noticing in the latter, are equally an object of amusement and ridicule to the former. I do not condemn the elegancies and refinements of Parisian society; but I condemn those who go over to France for the purpose of imitating and adopting manners which are unsuited to the genius and character of their own countries. The gestures and manners which become a Frenchman, render the natives of other countries ridiculous. Imagine, for instance, an honest Dutchman returning to his country encumbered with Parisian elegances and refinements. This is a sort of phenomenon whereat men and brutes may marvel; for it is difficult to refer him to any known class of animals, since he has lost his natural character without acquiring that of the foreigners he endeavours to imitate. I have stated on a former occasion that the French are adepts in cheating travellers of their money; but this censure is not applicable to the whole nation, nor to all Paris, but only to the faubourg St Germain, the quarter of the town chiefly resorted to by foreigners. Here are to be found tavern-keepers, tradesmen, and professors, all eminently skilled in their respective callings, and above all in the art of laying snares for strangers, and in stimulating them by every species of allurement to indulge in luxury and dissipation. But this is far from being a national vice; for the French are liberal, generous, and so frank and incautious in their conduct, that they are oftener dupes themselves than the authors of deception. Even the tradespeople of the faubourg St Germain suffer frequently from their credulity; they cheat strangers, and they are cheated by strangers in their turn; they are at once rooks that prey upon carcasses, and carcasses preyed upon by rooks; for many foreigners, when they have dissipated all their

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money, and obtained a supply from money-lenders, either go off without paying their debts, or evade their creditors with promises to pay, which they never mean to fulfil.

The French pique themselves on the elegance of their manners, and upon the ease and graceful fluency of their conversation; in these points they believe themselves superior to all other nations; but all nations do not agree in the definition of excellences and defects. Qualities which are admired in one country are stigmatized as defects in another; thus the urbanity of one nation may appear like theatrical extravagance to another. A Frenchman's elegance of manners is regarded as impudence by a Spaniard, and a Spaniard's gravity is considered moroseness by a Frenchman. He who would be ridiculed in the north for denying himself the comforts of life, would pass for a man of moderate habits in Italy. The liberality of a German is stigmatized as extravagance in Holland; and the persevering resolution peculiar to Englishmen is censured as contumacy in other countries; so that different qualities are deemed good or bad according to the different character and genius of the country in which they prevail. The good qualities on which Frenchmen pique themselves are rather conventional than real virtues; they are virtues in France, because they are consistent with that *bienséance* which regulates French manners; but the concurrent suffrages of other nations are wanting to constitute them real virtues. Frenchmen, indeed, appeal to the suffrages of other nations, since all the youth of Europe go in crowds to Paris, to acquire the elegances and accomplishments of that capital; but the youth of all countries are captivated by puerilities, and such an argument is little calculated to establish the pretensions of Frenchmen to superior merit. For my own part, though I delight in witty

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conversation, and am pleased with urbanity of manners, I am annoyed by those minute refinements on which Frenchmen value themselves, and the want of which they deplore in other nations. Even among Frenchmen some individuals are to be met with, who dislike these refinements, and accommodate themselves to the manners of other countries. French officers, and even common soldiers, who have served abroad, are frequently distinguished from their countrymen who have never travelled, by their taciturnity, their modesty, and the correct gravity of their deportment. On the other hand, Frenchmen who have never had any intercourse with their barbarous neighbours, as they term them, and—above all—the young men who are commonly called *petits maîtres*, are for the most part intolerable; they are phenomena, at the bare sight of which I have always felt alarmed. In my opinion, it would be for the advantage of the youth of France, if they travelled to other countries; and for that of the youth of other countries, if they remained at home. Our young countrymen, when they return from France, endeavour, in despite of nature, to imitate the manners of the French, and appear like amphibious monsters to all sober-minded persons. Nothing is more graceful than uniform consistency of demeanour; and how can this consistency be maintained, if men endeavour to sink their natural character, and assume a foreign character which never sits easily upon them? I am speaking here merely of French manners; for, with respect to literature, France is its chosen seat, and there is no country in the world where a greater proficiency may be made, or a better taste formed, in all the liberal arts. I confess that I owe every thing to French books; for by reading these I acquired the literary taste for which my works have obtained some character. Nothing can be more free and

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unrestrained than the manners, nothing more chaste and simple than the literature, of the French; so that in writing books they seem entirely to throw off the national character.

The branches of literature to which the French chiefly devote themselves, are eloquence, poetry, and history. In their epistles and orations they pay more attention to important facts than to rhetorical embellishments, for the French language is ill calculated for the display of subtlety, equivocation, or adventitious ornament. They are inferior to the Italians and the English in heroic poety, which requires a magnificence of diction, to which the chaste simplicity of their language is ill suited. In history they have surpassed all other nations; nothing is wanting to the perfection of some of their historical compositions but that unrestrained freedom of writing which is enjoyed by the English. France has also produced many philosophers of great eminence; but as they want the resolute perseverance of the English, they are not always profound. Hence the trite observation, that if the French philosophers thought more, and the English less intensely, they would both be perfect.

Quickness of apprehension, or presence of mind, (présence d'esprit) is a quality for which this nation is eminently conspicuous. The French perceive readily the details of any business, and are prompt in carrying them into execution. Hence, in the conduct of matters which do not admit of delay, there is no people to be compared with them. In the heat of battle, or in any sudden emergency which renders it necessary to adopt a plan on the spur of the moment, presence of mind is of essential importance; and accordingly we find that France has produced more celebrated generals than almost the whole of Europe. Judgment and prudence are qualities not less indispensable in a commander,

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but the presence of mind which it is necessary to exert in the heat of the conflict excites greater admiration. He who foresees and provides against danger is deemed a prudent general, but he who retrieves a sudden calamity by a resource suggested at the moment, is supposed to be endowed with more than human intelligence.

In matters of mere judgment, however, the French are considered inferior to some of their neighbours; for the difficulties from which they extricate themselves with so much dexterity are frequently attributable to their own imprudence; and the same quickness of intellect which enables them to retrieve misfortunes, often becomes the source of new calamities. I admire men who get down from a precipitous mountain without breaking their bones, but I commend those who do not climb to the top of it without necessity. If French dexterity were blended with Spanish hesitation, the union of these qualities might be beneficial; but both qualities are rarely found united. The French cannot brook delay, but are anxious that every thing they wish to be done should be done quickly; hence the remark, that if you want to extort the truth from a Frenchman, you must not apply the spur to your horse, but ride him slowly.

The French are so fond of society, that they look upon men who are attached to solitude as something scarcely human. The court, surrounded as it is with so many perils and discomforts, is in their estimation the true seat of enjoyment. Banishment from the court is the severest disgrace, and retirement in the country the worst species of imprisonment, that can befall a Frenchman.

But enough of the French; let me now cross the seas, and visit the English, with whose character I am thoroughly acquainted.

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The English are either angels or devils; for one of the peculiarities of this people is to spurn all mediocrity. There is no medium either in their virtues or their vices; the good are excessively good, and the bad immoderately bad. There is no country in the world which has furnished so many examples of exalted virtue and despicable treachery. The aristocracy have at one time hazarded every thing to save their country, and at another hazarded every thing to betray it.

Religion and infidelity, enthusiasm and indifference, industry and sloth, every kind of good and bad quality, here come to maturity; so that England may be said to be the hotbed of virtue and of vice, of all that is most admirable, and all that is most deserving of condemnation. I will explain my meaning somewhat more fully by giving a few instances of the peculiarities of this people. There is no nation which is at the same time more industrious, and more addicted to sloth. Indolent Englishmen cannot be compelled to work either by hunger or by imprisonment; hence mechanics and artificers are seen rotting in the public gaols, who might easily pay their debts and supply their necessities, if they would consent to exert their hands and limbs. On the other hand, Englishmen who are fond of labour, are fond of it to excess; they are deterred by no dangers, discouraged by no difficulties, but will attempt impossibilities either to gratify their curiosity, or satisfy their thirst of gain. It may be said of Englishmen, that they either rot from the effects of idleness, or exhaust themselves by excess of labour and application.

Nor is any moderation observed in their literary pursuits; they either dislike reading, or devote their days and nights to books, and not unfrequently lose their understanding in endeavouring to improve it.

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There is no country in Europe, perhaps, in which there are so many learned and so many ignorant members of the clerical profession.

In their religious opinions the same extremes prevail; piety and impiety, credulity and incredulity, fanaticism and atheism, hold alternate sway; every thing is implicitly believed, or every thing is audaciously rejected. Their piety frequently tends to superstition, and their scepticism to mere natural religion. Those who follow the doctrines of the Romish church are more zealously attached to the pope than Spaniards or Italians, and are ready to expose life, limb, and reputation, or even to betray their country, for his sake. The Protestants on the other hand believe the pope of Rome to be the devil incarnate. It is owing to the excessive fervour and the great incredulity which prevail in England with respect to religion, that Christianity has nowhere been more violently assailed, or more ably defended.

It is evident from this sketch of the English character, how erroneous the conclusions of those writers must be, who ascribe to the whole nation good and bad qualities which belong only to a part of the people; for it may be truly said that England is at once the best and the worst of the nations of Europe. Other nations have their peculiar virtues and vices, but observe more moderation in both, and do not arrive at the same maturity in either; for the characters of most men are so compounded of good and bad qualities, that it is not easy to refer them to a particular class.

There are some characteristic peculiarities, however, which may be applied to the whole English nation. They are too vain of themselves, and too much inclined to despise foreigners. This vanity is pardonable, if we reflect upon their happy govern-

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ment, their wealth, the fertility of their soil, and the various blessings which nature has lavished upon them. The men are for the most part brave, and the women beautiful; the former have gained an ascendancy abroad, but the latter reign paramount at home. The English, who aim at universal dominion, patiently submit to the yoke of female government; and while they meet external aggression like lions, they cower under domestic tyranny like mice. We have lately witnessed an instance of a general, at whose name the greater part of Europe trembled, submitting with passive obedience to the tyranny of his wife; nor is this spirit of submission to the sex peculiar to the hero I allude to, for almost the whole nation partakes of it.

The apprehension of the English is not so quick as that of the French, but their judgment is sounder. They talk little, but what they say is well digested. They excel in oratory; indeed they are the only people of modern Europe who rival the ancient Greeks and Romans in the art of public speaking. In other countries elegant and polished orations are delivered, but they want the vigour which unrestrained freedom of speech imparts to the effusions of English eloquence. The speeches delivered in the English parliament may sustain a comparison with the best models of Greek and Roman eloquence, which they resemble in being pronounced on occasions of great public importance, and on subjects immediately connected with the interests of the state. To this freedom of speaking and writing is also to be attributed their superiority over other nations in writings relating to religion and morals. They are inferior to the French in their historical compositions, which are rather dry details of facts, than well-digested histories; and though they are not restrained from publishing the truth by any

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considerations of fear, yet, as England is divided into political factions, the spirit of party frequently induces them to suppress the truth.

It has been said that the devil once threw all the ancient and modern languages into a brass pot, and that, when the pot began to boil, he made the English language out of the scum. This story was evidently invented by some one who thought the English language rather a chaos of other idioms, than a distinct dialect; but the number of words which the English have borrowed from other nations has added to the copiousness of their language, and to their power of expressing every sentiment of the human mind with energy and sublimity. The richness of the language has conspired with the character of the nation to give excellence to their heroic poetry; and no poets, after Homer and Virgil, have attained the eminence of Milton and Pope. In their comedies they do not equal the French; for they have a taste for a peculiar kind of humour, which is offensive to foreigners. When the drama flourished in this country, I tried to translate some of the English plays into Danish; but nobody relished them. They were not deficient in point and facetiousness, but they wanted that festive character which is the soul of comedy. As the English are greatly addicted to profound m ditation, their country may be considered a true school of philosophy. It has produced philosophers not less distinguished for their morals than their attainments, who possess all the virtues and the learning, without the affectation and the uncleanliness, of the sages of antiquity. The light which their labours have thrown upon mathematical science, and upon natural and moral philosophy, is known to all Europe; indeed, England may be truly said to be the country of heroes and philoso; hers.

Their taste in literature has varied at different

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periods of their history. Blackmore observes, that his countrymen once read with avidity tales of giants, monsters, and knight-errants; that they afterwards delighted successively in equivocal subtleties, in pompous inflation, in harmonious elegance of diction; and that now the prevailing taste is for solid, unsophisticated erudition. The English preachers seem now studiously to avoid the sonorous phraseology which was once so much in vogue, and to confine themselves exclusively to the explanation and illustration of scriptural texts. Every branch of literature has been greatly advanced in this country by the emoluments and honours which are lavished on men of letters. Noblemen, commanders of armies, kings themselves, do not think it beneath their dignity to swell the list of authors by their literary labours. The illustrious Newton was lately buried with almost regal state, his bier being supported by nobles of the realm; and a short time before, when Burnet completed his history of the Reformation, thanks were voted to him by both houses of parliament. When such honours are bestowed on learning, it is not surprising that the progress of England in the liberal arts should have surpassed that of the rest of Europe, and that the muses should, as it were, have chosen this island for their favourite retreat. There is another circumstance which has contributed to give them this intellectual superiority: I allude to the readiness with which they surrender prejudices to the triumphs of reason. The brains of Englishmen are like polished tablets, on which you may impress any thing which does not shock reason and common sense; whereas in other countries established usages, like the dictates of a second nature, reign with tyrannical sway. If you wish to convince a Spaniard of the truth of any doctrine or opinion, you must first get rid of his ancient prejudices. Here is a double labour;

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for you have not only to make a new impression, but to efface all traces of the old one. An Englishman, on the contrary, when he hears any new doctrine broached, readily apprehends and examines it, and, if it stand the test of examination, as readily embraces and inculcates it. Hence the great variety of opinions which prevail in this country on subjects connected with religion, politics, and morals. As the English believe nothing which they do not comprehend, and avow frankly what they comprehend, and as freedom of opinion is not limited by any legal restraints, there are as many atheists in this country as there are hypocrites in other countries. There is perhaps in reality a greater number of atheists in Italy; but the number seems less, since they conceal their infidelity under the mask of piety. In England you may distinguish the pious from the irreligious, for, in general, men who appear to be religious really are so; but this distinction can scarcely be made in other countries, where men conceal their sentiments from the fear of punishment. For the same reason good citizens are in England easily distinguished from the disaffected, and the government may rely on the sincerity of those who profess an attachment to existing institutions. Such are the effects of liberty, which, among various inconveniences which result from it, is the source of a far greater proportion of benefits to the state.

The English are exceedingly indulgent towards those who reject altogether the established religion, but bitter persecutors of those who dissent from it only in a minute degree. Thus they have no objection to Jews, Turks, and Pagans; but they detest and abominate such of their brethren as dissent from them in some unimportant ceremonies. Hence, if you wish to lead a quiet life, and be accounted a good citizen, you must be completely orthodox, or

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a frantic infidel; for a moderate degree of error will not save you from hatred and persecution, and you can only live in peace by believing the whole, or rejecting every part, of their religion. This absurdity, though eminently conspicuous in England, is not peculiar to that people. It prevails perhaps to as great an extent in other countries; thus a Persian is more odious than a Christian to a Turk, an orthodox Roman Catholic hates a Jansenist more cordially than a Calvinist, and a genuine theological hatred subsists between the different orders of monks.

The clergy live with less restraint in England than in other countries, for they are not afraid of being seen in theatres and taverns. But if they live with less restraint, they preach with greater moderation; for they stand in the pulpit almost motionless, with their eyes fixed to the ground, and deliver devout, solid expositions of the scriptures; differing widely in this respect from the continental preachers, who distort their limbs with a kind of frantic enthusiasm, and resort to theatrical gestures which are calculated to excite the derision rather than the sympathy of their hearers. It has been objected as a fault against the English preachers, that they read their sermons from manuscript; but the consequence of this practice is, that their discourses are more coherent, and that tautology is avoided. Hence my ears were offended by the first sermon I heard after my return from England; for having been accustomed to methodical, well-digested sermons, I observed so much confusion and repetition in the discourse of the preacher, that it seemed as if an hour had been consumed in delivering what might have been said in one fourth of that time.

The following are points of comparison which may be remarked in the characters of the French and English. The French are greater talkers, the Eng-

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lish greater thinkers; the former excel in vivacity, the latter in solidity of intellect. The French dress with splendour, the English with neatness; the French live almost exclusively on bread, the English on meat. Both are passionate; but it is the blood which rouses the passion of a Frenchman, and the bile which exasperates an Englishman. The anger of a Frenchman is more violent, that of an Englishman more pertinacious. A Frenchman spends his money on his clothes, an Englishman on his belly. A Frenchman follows the stream, an Englishman delights in struggling against it. The friendships of the French are quickly formed, and as quickly dissolved; those of the English are formed slowly, and as slowly relinquished. The French respect their superiors, the English respect themselves; the former are better citizens, the latter better men. The mental endowments of the French are of a more refined, those of the English of a loftier, character. The French practise virtue for the sake of reputation, and seek the reward of meritorious actions in popular applause; the English practise it for its own sake, and seek no reward but that which springs from the consciousness of rectitude. There is the same relative difference in their vices as in their virtues. Both commit crimes; the French from the love of gain, the desire of vengeance, or similar motives; but the English are often criminal for the mere sake of committing crime. The French, like the people of other countries, often commit crimes in the hope of escaping punishment, but the English frequently commit crimes because they know they cannot escape unpunished; so that the very severity of the law, which deters others from crime, often operates as an additional stimulus on the English for the commission of offences. 'I would commit this offence,' exclaims the Frenchman, 'if the law permitted it.' 'I would

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not commit this offence, if it were not prohibited by law,' is frequently the language of the Englishman.

The French do not live penuriously, but the English have a passion for the pleasures of the table. The former eat for the sake of living, the latter live for the sake of eating. The French delight in dishes seasoned with culinary skill, the English prefer plain but succulent dishes; French dishes are prepared with ingenuity, and address themselves to the palate—English dishes are dressed without art, and make a direct appeal to the belly. The French drink either to allay thirst or to exhilarate the spirits; the English often drink for the mere sake of drinking. The French believe before they examine; the English examine before they believe. Frenchwomen live with little restraint, since their husbands are not jealous; Englishwomen live with still less restraint, though their husbands are jealous of them to madness. Both possess fertility of imagination; but the imagination of the French is more regulated, while that of the English savours more of extravagance. Hence in their conversation and writings the French have more vivacity and grace, the English more richness and luxuriance. The French, however wretched may be their condition, are attached to life, while the English frequently detest life in the midst of affluence and splendour. English criminals are not dragged, but run to the place of execution, where they laugh, sing, cut jokes, insult the spectators; and if no hangman happens to be present, frequently hang themselves. As the character and manners of these two nations are so different, the hostility which constantly subsists between them ceases to be surprising. With respect to England, it is certainly one of the most singular countries in the world. We meet here with many peculiarities

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which excite our admiration and astonishment; and if any readers should suppose that my account of the virtues and vices of this people is hyperbolical, let them remember that one cannot write of a nation which scorns all mediocrity, otherwise than in the language of hyperbole.

Let me now return to the continent, and take a survey of a more natural race of people. Besides the French and English, I have had some intercourse with Dutchmen, Germans, and Italians. Nature is a step-dame to the Dutch. Some millions of human beings are crowded together within a few acres of marshy soil, and even for this soil they are indebted to their own labour, and not to the liberality of nature. The land they inhabit is their own creation; hence it has been wittily said by a certain poet,

Tellurem fecere Dii, sua littora Belgæ.

This small portion of land is abundantly productive, but not sufficient to maintain a hundredth part of its inhabitants. With respect to the intellectual endowments of the Dutch, nature has also dispensed them with a parsimonious hand; for they are not to be compared with the French and English either in genius or in judgment. Notwithstanding this general sterility the Belgian republic is entitled to a pre-eminent rank among the nations of Europe, both for her wealth and her wisdom; for what nature has denied, her industry has abundantly supplied. Other countries may boast of their natural productions; Holland has triumphed over the parsimony of nature by effecting every thing for herself. Other nations may boast of superior qualities and loftier endowments of mind; the Dutch possess nothing but common sense; but their common sense has accomplished a greater number of useful works than the wit and subtlety of their neighbours. Other nations excel in the splendour,

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the Dutch in the usefulness, of their achievements; the works of other people are often admirable but useless, those of the Dutch are useful without exciting our admiration. Others run with greater swiftness, but the Dutch, at a far slower rate, arrive first at the goal. Other men are frequently led astray even by the superiority of their mental qualities; the Dutch, taking common sense for their compass, seldom steer from the point. If they have no inventive faculty themselves, they copy the productions of others with accuracy and dexterity; or if they differ from their originals, they differ only to improve them; for they not only imitate with felicity, but are capable of giving polish and perfection to the works which they imitate. The success with which they have converted a number of marshes into a paradise embellished with beautiful towns, villages, and palaces, proves what human industry can accomplish. Wherever the eye turns, it is met by objects which excite our admiration. Industry gave birth to this republic; by industry it continues to flourish; and whenever that industry shall cease, it will fall to decay and ruin.

There are some persons who detect wit and cleverness in the Dutch satires and epigrams, of which an abundant crop is imported every year into this country. There is more coarseness than wit in their writings, which will be evident if we compare their facetious poetry with that of the French and English. We often confound the coarseness which reigns in the conversation and writings of the Dutch with wit, and are consequently apt to give them a higher character than they deserve. The Dutch language, which is broad and humorous, is much better suited to jocose and comic than to serious and tragic composition. Some years ago I wished to try how far my plays would succeed in a foreign language, and I accordingly had my first

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play, "The Political Tinman," translated into German and Dutch. The German version was feeble and heavy, but the Dutch one seemed to be even more humorous than the original. In serious and lofty subjects however this language, which has no pretensions to the praise of harmony, is rather calculated to excite merriment than to move the affections; a fact which I could prove by a multitude of passages in the Dutch tragedies.

The grammarians of this country have devoted a great deal of attention to the cultivation of the Dutch language; they have perhaps devoted too much attention to this object; for in endeavouring to make the language pure, they have rendered it obscure. They have banished all words borrowed from foreign languages; and as there are no Dutch terms to supply the place of the exiles, new ones are every day invented. Every body is familiar with the technical, philosophical, and grammatical terms which have been adopted by all nations; but these have been carefully expunged by the Dutch philologists, lest the purity of the language should be polluted by the contagion of foreign words. By so doing they have introduced unknown terms for those which were known; for instance, when they turn into Dutch the terms, *present, preterite, future, nominative, genitive, subject, object,* they create new terms and expressions, which render the Dutch language obscure even to Dutchmen themselves. This rigour and intolerance in their grammatical commonwealth is the more remarkable, as in their political and ecclesiastical commonwealth the Dutch are ready to bestow the rights of citizenship on all sects and descriptions of men. Holland, which is a common country to all mankind, banishes from her language words which are common to every other country in Europe.

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Of the Dutch it may be truly said in the language of the poet—

> Parcum genus est, patiensque laborum,
> Quæsitique tenax, et quod quæsita reservat.

The industry which necessity imposed upon them in the infancy of the republic has now become natural to them; for of all the people of Europe they are unquestionably the most industrious and indefatigable. Their parsimony is sometimes condemned, and sometimes approved; it is condemned by those who compare their situation to that of Tantalus, hungering and thirsting in the midst of affluence; and it is approved by those who maintain, that as industry and parsimony have alone raised them to their present station, so industry and parsimony can alone guarantee the continuance of their prosperity; for, while the wealth of other nations depends upon the fruits of the earth, the wealth of the Dutch depends upon the fruit of their own labour. It cannot be denied, however, that parsimony is frequently carried to too great an excess in this country, and that all present enjoyment is sacrificed in an overweening anxiety to provide for the future.

What I have here said of the parsimony of the Dutch is applicable also to their much-boasted cleanliness. The nature of the soil and of the atmosphere has in some measure imposed upon the inhabitants the necessity of cleanliness; but this cleanliness is carried to excess; for, as they are afraid of spitting on the floor, they squirt their saliva into earthen vessels placed in their rooms for that purpose; a disgusting practice, which in reality gives to Dutch houses the very appearance of filth it is intended to get rid of.

In the same manner the use of tobacco, which necessity has introduced, has been carried beyond all moderate limits. Inhabiting a marshy country,

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and breathing a moist, foggy atmosphere, they have found benefit in smoking this herb; but they smoke it to such excess, that if human flesh were sold in Holland, as it is in the American markets, a Dutchman's flesh might be classed among the smoked provisions.

The Dutch are so little subject to the influence of strong passions, that the coldness of a Hollander has become proverbial. This coldness is by some considered a fault, since human passions incite and keep alive the virtuous energies of our nature. But it is owing to this coldness that neither the virtues nor the vices of the Dutch arrive at maturity. If they cannot boast of heroic virtues, neither are they the slaves of love, jealousy, and revenge, and other frantic passions which disturb the repose of mankind. The women in this country are distinguished for their chastity, and a primitive modesty and simplicity of manners. Love is seldom so violent in the breast of a Dutch youth as to deprive him of reason, or impel him to have recourse to a halter. Dutch love and Dutch quarrels are equally tempered by discretion; they do not go mad, or hang themselves, out of affection for the fair sex, and they prefer settling their disputes by an appeal to the laws, rather than to the sword; for they consider it absurd in a party injured to seek reparation by exposing his own life.

The effects of this frigid temperament are perceived in the administration of the state, and in their judicial proceedings. All matters are slowly and deliberately investigated; but the decision, when once taken, is rapidly carried into effect; so that it is doubtful whether their caution in deliberating, or their promptitude in executing what has once been decided, is entitled to higher praise. The regularity which is observed in the minutest details extorts the wonder and astonishment of foreigners,

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The form of their government is not without its faults; but these faults are referable to its original concoction, and scarcely admit of remedy; for the constitution of the United Provinces was hastily framed in times of much political turbulence. The Dutch people however labour under a great delusion with respect to the amount of political power which they suppose themselves to possess; as they are in fact wholly excluded from all share in the administration of the state, which is in the hands of a few great families.

The Dutch are a sort of amphibious people, living as much on sea as on shore. With the occupations they unite the coarse unpolished manners of sailors; some of them indeed affect a French refinement; but as they lose their natural character in endeavouring to ape the manners of foreigners, they become objects of ridicule both to Frenchmen and to their own countrymen. There are some absurd instances of affected politeness and real vulgarity in the conduct of their ambassadors and plenipotentiaries. Thus in the year 1653, when the two envoys De Wit and Van Wawern arrived at the congress of Lubeck, they announced their arrival to the ambassadors of the other powers, begging them at the same time not to take it amiss if they postponed an immediate interview, as they would be obliged to devote some days to fitting up their houses in a suitable style of elegance for the reception of foreign ministers. When Charles the Second, king of England, objected to the States of Holland, that they had refused him some things which had been conceded to Cromwell; they replied, that the times were altered, for at the period he alluded to a great and formidable personage governed the English state.

From the foregoing hasty description of this people, it appears that the Dutch are more indebted

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to art and industry than to nature; and that they supply by that industry what nature has denied them. Their mental qualities are not brilliant; and though they have achieved much that has not been surpassed by any other nation of Europe, their achievements are to be regarded rather as the offspring of necessity, than as the spontaneous productions of genius.

Nearly the same observations may be applied to the Germans; for they are a discreet, moderate people, and are rarely guilty of any excess, except perhaps in eating and drinking. They seldom go out of the beaten track, but advance with a slow pace towards the goal, at which they generally succeed in arriving. Their virtues seldom reach the heroic character. They are brave, but do not show a preference for rushing upon death like the English. They cultivate literature, but do not go mad in the pursuit of it. They are patient of labour, but they are not so immoderately laborious as the Dutch. The Dutch labour, that they may accumulate wealth; the Germans, that they may live with respectability. The Dutch never intermit their exertions, the Germans allow themselves intervals of repose. Hence most of the good and bad qualities which may be observed in this people, are common to all mankind. But if we look to their government, laws, privileges, and customs, Germany will be found to be the most singular country in Europe. Its form of government is such as no other nation ever dreamed of; for it is neither monarchical, aristocratical, democratical, nor mixed. If it be asked therefore what form of government obtains in Germany, the only answer that can be given is, that Germans are governed after the German fashion. The same thing may be said of their laws, rights, and privileges. Many of these rights and privileges are mere creatures of the imagination; they are

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enjoyed in the abstract, but the practical exercise of them is interdicted. They delight in shadowy, unsubstantial titles, boast of invisible dominions, and lay claim to rights over European nations which no nation in Europe acknowledges. They call themselves Romans, having nothing in common with the Romans, and talk of a fourth monarchy still flourishing in Germany, which other people take to be an empire existing only in the brains of the Germans; for no rights can be conferred by the adoption of Roman laws, titles, forms of speech, the plurality of names, and other usages which they have borrowed from the ancient Romans. I have no desire however to dispute their pretensions, nor do I venture to impugn a title confirmed by the prescription of so many ages. The Germans seem to be persuaded of the truth of the fact, since they claim certain rights annexed to their fourth monarch. But they seem to me to have carried their imitation of the manners, customs, and style, of the Romans to a vicious excess. The Romans used to proscribe their own citizens; the Germans include foreigners in their proscription; and even the dead as well as the living are often placed under the ban of the empire. The Romans generally took three names, the Germans are scarcely content with eight or ten. The order in which words are placed in the Roman language is unnatural; but the Germans, in imitating this peculiarity, have rendered the construction of their language far more perplexed than that of the Latin. The Romans generally placed the verb at the end of a sentence, but the Germans often conclude a sentence with two or three verbs; the Romans separated the adjective from the substantive by a single word; the Germans frequently interpose five or six words between the substantive and the adjective. I forbear giving any opinion of the virtues and vices of the Germans.

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Other writers have remarked that they are much addicted to eating and drinking, and eager in the pursuit of empty titles and distinctions. Titles without possessions, and names which do not represent things, abound here more than in any country. The Germans often call themselves not only lords, but lords paramount, of property that has in point of fact no existence. In other respects they are honest, brave, trustworthy people. Their literature is highly respectable; though I am aware some persons speak contemptuously of it, because it consists rather of compilations than of methodized original productions. More elegant writers are found in other countries, but the learning and research of the Germans cannot be denied, and many of those who censure them ought in justice to acknowledge how much of their information they have derived from German sources. The vast collectanea of the German writers are often thrown into a methodical shape, and published as original productions, by men who abuse the persons they have robbed. This is an ungrateful as well as an unjust proceeding; unless they can show that in literature, as in war, whatever they take from an enemy becomes their own property. They who believe the Germans to be destitute of ingenuity and invention, know nothing of the history of the arts, to which few nations have rendered more useful contributions.

The German language, in itself sufficiently harsh and difficult, is rendered still more so by an affected imitation of the Latin language. The natural order of words is so completely transposed and disturbed, that you can understand nothing till you arrive at the end of a period; and as the periods are generally long, concluding perhaps with two or three governing verbs, the preceding members of a sentence often escape from the memory, and you are compelled

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to read a passage a second time before you can comprehend it. This abominable infliction upon readers the Germans consider a majestic peculiarity in their language. It is impossible, however, to account for diversities of taste; some men like sweet, and some sour dishes; some delight in wine, while others detest it; and we have no right to quarrel with the Pole who has a predilection for stinking herrings, or with the Englishman who eats his meat half raw, or with the Italian who in vocal music prefers discord to harmony. We have heard of a countryman who cut down the trees before his house because they attracted nightingales, whose singing annoyed him; and of a Russian emperor to whose ear no melody was so delicious as the neighing of a horse. I am far from condemning the taste of Germans in literature or in languages; I only say that their taste does not coincide with that of other people.

Italy is divided into so many different nations and districts, that it is impossible to speak of its inhabitants as of one people. The genius and manners of the Italians differ in different parts of Italy; but there is one point in which, with a few exceptions, they all agree—namely, degeneracy from the virtue of their ancestors. The ancient Italians were brave and warlike; the modern Italians are timid and effeminate. The ancient Italians subjugated the world; the modern Italians are the slaves of other nations. The former delighted in arms; the latter tremble at the sight of armed men, and govern nobody but their wives. Ancient Italy produced a race of heroes; modern Italy abounds only in poltroons. There is nothing in which the modern Italians resemble their ancestors except in their superstition. If we compare the prodigies of Livy with the legends of the modern Italians, it will be difficult to decide upon their respective merits; the

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prodigies of raising stones, and loquacious oxen, are fully equalled in point of absurdity by the miracles of Italian monks. In the arts of painting, sculpture, and poetry, the Italians have excelled the rest of Europe; but in theology, philosophy, and history, no work of merit has appeared, or can appear, in a country where the human mind is fettered by the dread of that detestable tribunal, the Inquisition. At the time of the revival of letters, Italy began to emerge from obscurity, and people of all countries crowded to her schools to receive instruction in literature, in science, and the arts; but this gleam of sunshine was but of short duration. The defects of the modern Italians may be ascribed as much to the circumstances in which they are placed, as to the character of the people; if those circumstances were changed, and opportunities were afforded them of emulating the virtue of their ancestors, we might see qualities called into action, which are now buried in the torpor of inactivity.

I have had no general intercourse with the Spaniards, so I cannot describe their character from personal observation; I shall not repeat remarks which others have made upon this people. I was rather pleased with the manners of the few Spaniards I accidentally met with in my travels; they seemed to me to be worthy, taciturn persons; and as I am not much addicted myself to eating and drinking, I do not abhor people who live on nothing but air. I suspect however, as my temper is somewhat impatient, that I should not be able to endure the slowness which is peculiar to Spaniards. Deliberation is a laudable quality; it tends to give perfection both to our actions and our writings; but some men carry it to an absurd excess. When Vaugelas had spent thirty years in translating Quintus Curtius into French, he was properly reproved by one of his acquaintances, who said, "I

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am afraid the French language will be altered before you finish your translation." The slowness of the Spaniards resembles that of the barber of whom Martial has wittily recorded, that while he was shaving off one beard, another grew up in its place.

Of the people of the North, though I am intimately acquainted with their national character and peculiarities, I cannot venture to speak; for they are a touchy, choleric race, and exceedingly apt to take offence at trifles. I shall leave the description of their virtues and vices, therefore, to those who have a taste for exposing themselves to the probable consequences of such an undertaking.

I am sensible that I have dilated too much on this subject, and that it is time to return to the account of my own literary labours. I have never cultivated artificial logic, being satisfied with the logic of nature and common sense. I do not dissuade others from applying themselves to this study, since its utility is generally acknowledged; I will only observe, that a man to whom nature has not given a logical head can never be made a good reasoner by art, and that on the other hand many men reason admirably, who know nothing of the art of logic. The same thing may be said of logic as of arts of memory. Technical modes of acquiring memory are publicly taught, and treatises have appeared on this subject; but experience has demonstrated that, while the methods suggested for aiding the memory are exceedingly troublesome to the learner, little practical benefit is derived from them; and the consequence is, that this art has fallen into disuse.

I have devoted so much time and attention to the science of jurisprudence, that I might almost be classed among professional jurisconsults. I have acquired the theory of the science, but I am defi-

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cient in the practical part of it; so that in technical formalities, which are learned only by practice, I am frequently obliged to take advice. As in our courts opinions are generally delivered extemporaneously, the office of judge is best discharged by those who have accumulated in practice a great mass of technical knowledge. This necessity of delivering opinions extemporaneously is calculated also to give an advantage to junior judges, whose perception is quicker, over their senior colleagues. It often happens that younger judges, though deficient in higher judicial qualifications, are yet able to give an extemporary opinion more readily than their seniors, because they have a quicker perception of the case. It is one thing, however, to perceive quickly, and another to weigh and examine our perceptions; and the superiority of senior judges to their younger brethren is felt when time is afforded for deliberation.

I spent the greater part of my youth in the study of languages; of the Hebrew language, however, I am so ignorant that I am not even acquainted with the characters. This negligence may appear surprising, since of late years the knowledge of this language is so universal among us, that we have almost as many Hebraists as students in Denmark. As the fashion for studying Hebrew commenced in this country at about the same time as the belief in an approaching millenium, I took it for granted that my countrymen were learning this language with a view to becoming citizens of the new kingdom which was then uppermost in their imagination. I do not think the sacred language ought to be neglected; but the study of it should be confined to students in theology, and to those who aim at filling the situation of public professors and lecturers. Time is wasted by teaching Hebrew to those who have no occasion for learning it; and the

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knowledge which cannot be turned to any practical use, whatever labour its acquisition may have cost, is for the most part speedily forgotten.

I entertain the same opinion of some other academical branches of study which seem to be pursued with an eagerness proportioned to the celerity with which they are forgotten. The study which I most strongly recommend to students is one which is most neglected—I allude to the art of oratory. To the clergy this art would be especially useful; but our priests seldom think of studying rhetoric, until they have entered upon their sacred functions. They then discover too late, that they have consumed their time at the university in studies which are of no practical advantage to them, and that they are novices in the art to which their whole lives are to be dedicated. They discover that they are equipped with all sorts of arms, except that weapon which alone could be useful to them in the field.

With what view and to what end I read history, my historical works demonstrate; for these are not barren annals, but digested narrations, giving an account, not only of wars, but of domestic affairs, of internal as well as foreign policy, of institutions as well ecclesiastical as civil, displaying the genius and character of the governing powers and of those who are governed, and finally presenting a connected view of the virtues and vices of mankind. Most histories consist of nothing but a vast undigested mass of facts, and chiefly of facts connected with wars. Hence many writers imagine that they have discharged the duty of an historian, if they simply detail facts, without exercising a particle of judgment or discrimination. But it is no light matter to discharge the duty of an historian in a manner corresponding with the importance and dignity of history. I do not imagine that I have myself succeeded in adequately discharging this

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duty; I have only pointed out the way in which history ought to be written; I have only shown that it is not given to every literary aspirant to attain excellence in this branch of composition. I have especially noted a fault common to our northern historians. The hunters after manuscripts are in the habit of looking upon every ancient musty document they meet with as so much treasure, and they make a point of introducing its contents into their histories, without reference to its intrinsic merits. Our countryman Torfæus is censured for this fault by John Le Clerc; and Huitfield, with most of our northern historians, is equally chargeable with it. Our tomes of history are prodigiously corpulent; but they would be reduced to very slender volumes, if they were stripped of all superfluous matter.

No facts should be introduced into history except such as are really important and worthy of notice. There are superfluities in church and state as well as in the human body, and these superfluities should be banished from narrations of ecclesiastical and civil affairs. I have often thought of writing a dissertation upon superfluities; but other engagements have compelled me to abandon, or rather to postpone, my intention.

I have before observed, that I profited more by meditation than by reading, in the study of moral philosophy. The principles which I espouse are incidentally developed in my published works, especially in my lives of distinguished characters, in my epigrams, and in my Journey to the World under Ground. My friends have often urged me to publish a system of moral philosophy; but as my opinions are very much opposed to established notions, I have not judged it prudent to undertake this task. Some time ago I committed to paper, by way of experiment, a few loose thoughts on this

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subject, which I will here submit to the judgment of the reader.

Specimen of a System of Moral Philosophy.

Of Piety.

Piety is either feigned, erroneous, or true. Feigned piety, which should rather be called impiety or irreligion, is worse than absolute atheism; for, while atheists disavow God, hypocrites secretly deride him. There is no crime more horrible and detestable, and at the same time none which is of more frequent occurrence. Let us suppose two subjects, one of whom calls the rights of his sovereign in question, and openly disavows his authority; while another testifies his submission by an oath of allegiance, and by every external mark of deference and respect, yet in secret ridicules and endeavours to destroy his authority. Which of these subjects is likely to be more odious to his sovereign, and to receive a severer punishment at his hands, it requires no conjurer to determine.

Erroneous piety is either metaphysical, mechanical, or common.

Metaphysical piety has its origin among speculative recluses; it surpasses the comprehension of most men, and is therefore of little use in human society; it is generally accompanied with melancholy and mental disturbance, and it frequently mistakes the reveries of the imagination for genuine inspiration. Enthusiasts often neglect the most essential duties of Christianity, while they imagine that they discharge them all. Such is the piety of the Quietists, who, in labouring to unite themselves with God, and divest themselves of every thing corporeal and carnal, become monstrous nonentities,

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of a nature neither corporeal nor spiritual. In renouncing humanity, they become perfectly inhuman, and ought to be regarded as spectres or lumber on the face of the earth. They have this in common with spectres, that they are frequently the cause of dread and apprehension; since their gloomy imagination leads them to represent God, not as a benevolent and merciful Creator, but as a severe and ferocious tyrant. Such views of religion have the effect of brutalizing the human mind; and we generally find this metaphysical piety accompanied with misanthropy.

I apply the term mechanical to the piety of those who, like the former class, believe themselves to be pious, though in reality they are not so; for as their devotion is not derived from a genuine source, it should rather be called gloominess of disposition than piety. These persons mistake ill-humour for zeal; sadness for the fear of God; and fits of hypochondriacism for contests with evil spirits. Confirmed in their error by foolish people, who imagine the consequences of a morbid state of body to be so many proofs of extraordinary virtue, their moroseness exceeds all rational bounds; they fancy themselves commissioned by God to act as censors upon earth; they rail against all mankind; they declaim with frantic extravagance against innocent amusements; and whenever they meet with a man of happy and cheerful temperament, they denounce him as a carnal sinner enthralled by and devoted to the devil. It sometimes happens that these persons, when their vicious humours have seriously affected their health, apply to medical men for assistance; and by dint of copious evacuations their piety sometimes passes off with the bodily secretions. When a cure is effected in this way, the world appears to them with quite a new face; their zeal is converted into indifference, and their

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severity into indulgence. Cases occur every day which prove that this sketch is drawn from nature, and not from the imagination. Nor are patients who labour under this disease to be convinced of their error by parallel instances of delusion; for there is nothing they can brook so ill as the consolations of those who ascribe their excess of virtue to a foul state of their viscera. There is no better remedy for that spurious species of devotion which depends upon an acrimonious state of the humours, than a liberal exhibition of laxative pills. I speak in some measure from experience on this subject, for I am frequently troubled with vicious humours; and as I am apt on such occasions to be inflamed with a desire of reforming mankind, whenever I feel my virtue getting the better of me, I immediately have recourse to a drastic purge.

Common piety is that which is exercised by persons who in their own judgment and in the opinion of the vulgar, are true Christians, because they perform certain ceremonies rather enjoined by usage than dictated by the heart. The definition of a pious and religious man, according to the common hypothesis, is this. A pious man is he who, falling down upon his knees at certain hours of the day, prays to heaven, or moves his lips with folded hands, or who at the sound of a bell recollects he is a Christian, and follows a crowd of persons to church. A pious man is he who duly pays his tithes and offerings, who persecutes all who dissent from the established church to which he belongs, who embraces without examination the confession of faith which the majority has adopted, and who finally dies in a devout manner; that is to say, with his hands folded in the presence of a priest, who lays his hand upon his head, and pronounces a blessing upon him. Of the salvation of such a person no question is entertained; he is declared by every

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body to have lived and died devoutly; and that the fact may be placed beyond all doubt, the state of the defunct person is commonly described with great accuracy in a copy of verses, wherein he is represented as clothed in a white garment, holding a palm-leaf in his hand, and singing heavenly hymns amidst a choir of responsive angels. According to this hypothesis, admission into heaven is obtained by a slight degree of bodily exertion, rather than by any effort of the mind. Certain motions of the feet, lips, &c. are duly performed, and the piety of the performer is straightway celebrated in prose and verse. Thus Paulus Jovius extols the piety of pope Leo the Tenth, which he proves by the following cogent argument: 'He was an exact observer of fasts, and administered the mass with decency.' The piety of Otto the Third was in like manner demonstrated by his robe, which was embroidered with subjects taken from the Revelations. Aristobulus the Younger was by the unanimous consent of the Jews deemed a fit person to be elevated to the office of high priest, because he performed sacrifices with great dignity and gracefulness of demeanour. Not to multiply examples, I pass over many facts of more recent occurrence, which would clearly demonstrate how grievously the mass of mankind err in their definition of piety. I do not condemn external religious ceremonies; on the contrary, I approve of them; but if they are unaccompanied with any practical amendment of our lives, they become mere theatrical mummery.

From the foregoing observations, the nature of what I conceive to be true piety may be easily conjectured. They are truly pious who with all their hearts reverence and love God our Creator and Benefactor, not so much on account of the rewards he has promised us, for this would be a mercenary motive, as on account of the benefits

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which we have received at his hands. They are truly pious, who are severe towards themselves, and indulgent towards others; who endeavour to correct error, not by punishment, but by persuasion; who commiserate sinners, instead of devoting them to damnation. They are truly pious, who worship God not so much with their lips, as with their hearts; not by sudden starts and impulses, but by uniform endeavours to conform their lives to his holy precepts. They are truly pious, who are gentle and kind-hearted, cultivating peace with all mankind, and waging war only against evil passions; who console the afflicted, who relieve the poor, who clothe the naked, who are neither inflated by prosperity, nor depressed by adversity, but who humbly acquiesce in the divine will. They are truly pious, who give practical proofs of their piety; whose virtue, not like the moonshine virtue of heartless hypocrites, shines forth with native brightness in the actions of their lives; who pursue a just and honourable path, not from motives of ambition or of fear, but of their own free choice; and who, indifferent to things terrestrial, fix their affections only on the treasures of immortality. This is sufficient to explain my notions of true piety; for it is needless to expatiate on Christian duties which are every day expounded from the pulpit; and my object is not to treat my readers with a hash of morality out of the dishes which have been a hundred times set before them by philosophers and preachers who have preceded me, but to detect the errors and remove the obscurities which lead us to mistake the shadow of virtue for its substance, as Ixion embraced a cloud for a goddess.

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Of Decorum.

Whatever agrees with the manners and customs of a particular people, is among that people decorous; whatever disagrees with those manners and customs, is indecorous. In the countries where people were formerly prohibited by law from using silk garments, or wearing the robe as low as the ancles, the prohibited dress was indecorous. The Lacedemonians, among various arts which they held in contempt, are said to have condemned music; while the rest of the Greeks considered skill in vocal and instrumental music a mark of the highest erudition. Thus Epaminondas is said to have been an excellent performer on the fiddle; and when Themistocles was unable to play the lyre at a banquet, his inability was looked upon as a defect in his education.

It rests with the state to define what is decorous and what is indecorous in indifferent matters; and in such matters nothing is decorous or indecorous, which the law or usage does not declare to be so. Thus, as soon as the practice of wearing silk garments was sanctioned by usage, the impropriety of wearing such garments ceased with the implied abrogation of the law. But whatever is novel and unusual is supposed by the vulgar to be opposed to natural propriety, whereas many acts and usages which appear to be natural, are in reality perfectly arbitrary. Thus, when the question was formerly agitated in this country, whether priests should shave their beards? the common people were struck with horror at the proposition. To shave a parson was in their opinion to aim a deadly blow at religion, and to pluck up morality by the roots. Yet we have survived this prejudice, and even bishops may now appear with a smooth chin without being regarded with dismay. Whatever is

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unusual is considered indecorous, though it be indifferent, or even beneficial; while vices, which have received the sanction of long usage, are deemed graceful and becoming. Thus it has been so long the fashion in the north of Europe to commit excesses in eating and drinking, that although no vices are more brutal and more unworthy of a Christian than gluttony and drunkenness, yet they entail no disgrace on those who are addicted to them. Men who encourage debauchery of this kind, while they declaim against dramatic entertainments, and other innocent amusements, betray the citadel of morality, while they make a show of defending its outworks. Some persons pronounce dancing to be not only an indecorous but a criminal amusement; a rash decision in a matter which is at any rate so problematical, that even the popes have suspended their judgment upon it. Erroneous judgments as to the character of actions in themselves indifferent, arise from an ignorance of the principles of moral philosophy, and from a habit of confounding mere arbitrary usages with the dictates of nature. No rational objection can be urged against the amusements of singing, dancing, playing on musical instruments, &c. provided they be pursued with moderation. We learn from Seneca, that Scipio did not disdain to join in the dance, with all his martial insignia about his person; and Sallust reproves Sempronia, not because she danced, but because she danced too well.

It is argued in a treatise of Cicero, that whatever may be done without indecency, may also be spoken of without indecency; and the proposition is generally true. Many expressions are voted in society to be indelicate, which in reality have no sins of their own to answer for. The very objection to expressions not essentially indelicate, furnishes a proof of something more or less than modesty on

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the part of the objectors. I entirely concur in the propriety of withholding from the hands of youth some of the ancient poets, in whose productions very objectionable passages are to be met with; and I agree for the same reason with those who condemn Bayle for introducing obscenities of the grossest description into his Dictionary. But there are a thousand acts and expressions, not essentially repugnant to natural decency, which are condemned as indecent, because it is the custom to consider them so. Different names are applied to the same things, according to the different opinions of those who estimate them; thus the things called by some men self respect, love of liberty, love of beauty, will by others be designated vanity, rebellion, lust. In Spain it would be as great an affront to a lady to offer to kiss her cheek, as to make a direct attack upon her chastity; in France and England it is only a mark of ordinary attention to salute a lady. Formerly ladies were obliged to tremble, blush, and, in some cases, faint away, whenever the name of a man was mentioned; the perturbation which was at that time indispensable, as a proof of modesty, would now be considered ridiculous affectation. I remember, when I was a child, it was held to be indelicate in a young lady to return the kiss which politeness demands from a gentleman; now she would be thought morose and ill-mannered if she omitted the ceremony. Our posterity will perhaps scarcely forbear laughing when they hear some of the forms of speech which are now current among us. What will they think of such phrases as 'My slippers, *saving your reverence;* I put on my shoes, *if I may use the expression;* or—I pulled off my waistcoat, *if I may be allowed the image?*' A century hence such expressions as these, which are now considered necessary by way of apology for words

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involving nothing essentially indelicate, will in all probability appear extremely ridiculous.

If it be asked, what good these animadversions can effect, or what mischief can arise, if men's words and actions are restrained by those laws which their ancestors deemed essential to the preservation of decency, I answer that it is the duty of a philosopher not only to attack the vices, but to expose the follies and absurdities of mankind; especially as we know from experience, that no subjects give rise to more furious disputes and dissensions than those which are essentially matters of indifference. How bitter, for instance, were the denunciations which the priests fulminated against women who wore a particular sort of head-dress! They declared that the ornaments called *fontanges* were like the devil's horns; as if God really took an interest in the shape of a woman's head-dress, or as if the devil, in point of fact, wore horns. I forbear mentioning many other circumstances, equally trifling and ridiculous, which have given rise to serious political disturbances. Every body has heard of the fierce war, called *La Guerre des Capuchins*, which sprung up among the monks about the shape of their hoods; and as trifles are regarded with so much solicitude, it is not surprising on the other hand that things of greater moment are neglected, and that offences are often committed with indifference. We know that Olympias the mother of Alexander was no Lucretia; yet on her death-bed she is said to have covered her face with her hair, and her limbs with her garments, that nothing indecorous might be seen. Cæsar also, who had passed his whole life in debauchery, when he saw himself attacked by the daggers of his assassins, covered his head with his mantle, and drew the folds of the robe round his feet, that he might fall with decency.

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Of Happiness and Unhappiness.

Happiness and unhappiness are, in my opinion, terms which serve rather to distinguish one class of men from another, than to designate essentially different conditions. I have formerly expressed this idea in an epigram, the substance of which is, that in respect to happiness there is no essential difference in the condition of the rich and the poor, the healthy and the sick, slaves and freemen, &c.; and I will now endeavour to support this paradox in prose. I am aware that the proposition is startling, since it seems to be opposed to the common opinions and the universal experience of mankind; but let me not be condemned without a hearing. I say, that there is no real difference in the condition of men, commonly called happy and unhappy, in this world. That the condition of the rich differs little in reality from that of the poor, it will not be difficult to prove. The hunger which the poor often suffer from the want of food, is not unfrequently experienced by the rich from the excess of it; indeed, the evils resulting from defective nutrition of the animal economy are more frequently produced by satiety than by want. If the inconveniences arising from the deficiency or excess of food are nearly balanced, the poor have this advantage over the rich, that they relish the simplest fare, while the choicest viands fail to stimulate the jaded appetites of the higher classes. Dionysius did not approve of Spartan broth, because he wanted the condiment which would have made it palatable—hunger; but Darius, when he drank a cup of muddy water in his flight, declared that he had never partaken of a more delightful beverage. The poor are, for the most part, healthy and active; while the rich are enervated by diseases which luxury seldom fails to produce. The wants of the poor man are natural

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wants, and therefore easily satisfied; those of the rich man are artificial wants, which are in their nature insatiable. The very privations of the poor man are in fact sources of enjoyment; for if he cannot pamper his appetite with high-seasoned dishes and luscious wines, he escapes the miseries of indigestion and insomnolence. It is clear, therefore, that it is not easy to decide upon the superiority of the condition of the poor and the rich man. Besides, good and evil are not to be estimated, as the schoolmen say, according to the absolute quantity, but according to the relative quality of either as it affects the percipient; for what delights one man disgusts another, and that which has a powerful influence on some is regarded with apathy and indifference by others. If we reflect that few men perish from want, while numbers linger through a life of disease, and at length die from the effects of intemperance and excess, we shall perhaps be disposed to conclude that the poor are more fortunate than the rich.

Let us advert to some other considerations which support the view I have taken of the comparative condition of the wealthy and the inferior classes of society. The poor man thinks only of obtaining the common necessaries of life; the rich man is in a state of constant solicitude from his desire to preserve his treasures, and his fears lest force or fraud should deprive him of them. The feverish anxiety of the rich man's mind is generally indicated by his pale, care-worn countenance; while the poor man is much more frequently free from care, and cheerful, except when he assumes an air of wretchedness in order to extract contributions from the charitable. But admitting that both poor and rich have their cares, those of the poor are easily alleviated, while the anxieties of the rich cling to them like a fever which the constitution cannot shake

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off. This is proved by innumerable instances, not only in individuals, but in whole nations. What nation is richer than the English, and in what nation do people so frequently hang themselves? The Russians, who are the poorest people in Europe, are as much attached to life, as the English, who are the wealthiest, detest it. A townsman of mine informed me that he knew an English nobleman at Paris, who cut his throat for no other reason than that he could not bear a life of uninterrupted prosperity. Cicero cites an epigram on Cleombrotus of Ambracia, who was so much dissatisfied at never having met with any misfortune, that he threw himself into the sea. In Spain it sometimes happens that men of large fortune abandon all the supposed luxuries of life, and, assuming the garb and habits of vagabonds, beg their bread from door to door. No man lives contented with his own condition; the poor regard with envy the pomp and splendour which accompany wealth, but pomp and splendour contribute nothing to the real happiness of life. The desire of accumulating wealth has led, more frequently perhaps than any other passion, to the commission of crime; hence Christ has declared that the poor are blessed, and that it will be difficult for the rich to effect their salvation. I abstain from many other topics which might be urged in favour of poverty; and I proceed to that part of my subject which is of a less common-place character—I mean the comparison of slaves with freemen, and servants with their masters.

When I reflect on the labour, the scourging, and the contumely, which servants undergo, I compassionate the condition of men who seem to be scarcely elevated above brutes. But when I see servants robust, healthy, and more cheerful in mind and appearance than their masters, my compassion ceases. It is true that servants are subject to more

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sufferings than their masters; but these sufferings are less acute, because they are borne with greater fortitude, and calamity patiently endured ceases to be calamity. The stripes inflicted on the shoulders of a menial cannot be compared with the disquietudes which afflict the mind of his master. The rich boast of their freedom as well as of their wealth; but how can men be said to be rich, whose desires increase in proportion to their acquisitions? And how can they be called free, whose minds are too much agitated by conflicting passions to be capable of giving scope to any liberal sentiments, or of appreciating any pure and rational enjoyments? A slave sometimes suffers from the infliction of the lash, but the frowns of a sovereign can inflict a far deeper wound on the feelings of his lord. The bodily pain of the slave is but momentary, the mental suffering of his lord is often permanently fatal to his repose. How, says Cicero, can I deem that man free, whom grief overpowers, or who is overwhelmed and prostrated by any sudden calamity? for, though he owns no master, he cannot command himself. How many cares and anxieties attend princes and masters, from which their subjects and their servants are exempted! If the happiness of rulers be philosophically investigated, a king will appear to be the pilot of the state, who must watch while his subjects enjoy undisturbed repose. The same remark is applicable to any wealthy head of a family; so that servants differ from their lords rather in name than in reality. The reply of a master to his slave, who was complaining of his hard lot, and begging for manumission—'Imagine yourself master, and you will in reality be so,'—is as philosophical as it is facetious. Compare the condition of a healthy servant with that of his bloated, luxurious master; and you will understand that pleasure is least enjoyed by those who are most eager in

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the pursuit of it, and that happiness consists not in satiety, but in expectation. The happiness of this world is for the most part a chimera, which, like the influence of wine in our dreams, excites and deludes the imagination. The player who enacts the part of an emperor, differs little from the real emperor, except that he sleeps more soundly at night; and Dionysius, when he taught children at Corinth, after his expulsion from Syracuse, felt the same pleasure in the exercise of authority whether as a pedagogue or a monarch. Some years ago there was a singular society in this country, representing the college of cardinals. The person who sustained the character of pope was obliged to observe a due pontifical gravity in his language and demeanour; and one of the members of the society played this part to such perfection, that his natural character was actually merged in that which he had assumed. Some time after the dissolution of the society, this person, having occasion to plead his own cause before one of the tribunals in this city, spoke with so much emphasis and majesty that some of the judges at first suspected that he was not sober; but upon being informed by the president, who knew the individual, that he was the ex-pope, their rising indignation was converted into merriment.

I proceed to inquire how, and to what extent, the healthy differ in point of happiness from the sick. As all mankind recognise a great difference in their condition, I must betake myself to my oars, being afraid to use all my sails in arguing against the received opinion. Nevertheless, let us endeavour to get rid of our prejudices, and see whether there is as great an inequality in the condition of the healthy and the sick as men commonly imagine. In my Journey to the World under Ground is exhibited a picture of men who are subject to no diseases, but

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live till they grow grey in the possession of uninterrupted good health. Such persons would be commonly thought happy; but they can have no perception of happiness which is uninterrupted, nor can they feel that they are in the possession of health, because they have never experienced disease. They must live therefore in perpetual health, and at the same time in perpetual apathy, for uninterrupted enjoyment soon palls upon the senses. Sick men, on the contrary, feel intense delight in recovering from their diseases; or, if their disorders are intermittent, they have pleasures, which none but the sick can appreciate, in their intervals of ease. If therefore we compare the perpetual apathy of those who are uniformly healthy, with the alternate sufferings and pleasures of the sick, the balance will be nearly equal; for if the days of the former are never obscured by clouds, neither are they ever illumined by sunshine. Mathematicians tell us that the light of the sun is equally dispensed to every quarter of the globe; thus the inhabitants of the polar regions have no day in the winter, and no night in the summer months, so that, the whole year being taken into calculation, they enjoy as much light as those who live under the torrid zone. Those whose health is never interrupted by disease are neither sad nor cheerful, but live in a kind of middle state of unsocial apathy. The mind is roused and sharpened by excitement of the blood; and anger, which is a fever of the moral system, is said to be the whetstone of courage. What manly virtues can we expect to find in the mind which is sunk into torpor by continued enjoyment?

With respect to patients who are confined to their beds, or who enjoy no intervals of health, I must pause for a moment; for it would seem absurd to question the inequality of their condition. I will not, however, retreat even from this point without

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showing an inclination to maintain my ground; and I will at any rate point out some topics of consolation to those who labour under severe and unintermitting diseases. Experience shows, that all evils are most intolerable when we are first assailed by them, and that diseases, if they are sustained manfully on the first attack, lose much of their severity. Slight bites repeated at intervals are worse than a far more bitter bite of longer duration. In fact, no violent assault is lasting; and we see patients endure continued diseases with fortitude, because, on the one hand, the severity of those diseases is broken by their duration, and, on the other hand, the mind becomes callous by long suffering. Hence Cicero remarks, that pain of long duration is light, while that of short duration is commonly severe. Besides, the image of death, which impends, like the rock over Tantalus, over the minds of the healthy or those who are occasionally sick, is a source of consolation to the bedridden patient, who regards the approach of death with the same eye as a captive beholds the liberator who opens the doors of his prison. Add to this the weighty arguments to be derived from theology, which are so consolatory to the wounds of the sick, that if patients are not extremely unreasonable, they ought to look upon continued diseases as the greatest blessings which Providence can bestow.

In fact, the life of the rich as well as of the poor, of masters as well as of their servants, of the healthy as well as of the sick, is nothing but a tissue of calamities. The enjoyments of the mind are least subject to accident or decay; those of the body are fleeting and unsubstantial, and they are, besides, attended with so much anxiety, even during the short period of possession, that they scarcely deserve the name of true pleasures.

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Of Concord and Discord.

Nothing is supposed to contribute more to the stability of all human institutions than concord; it is said to be the cement by which all establishments, public as well as private, are held together. Hence some states have taken for their motto the maxim, that small establishments thrive by concord, while great ones are destroyed by discord. Hence also the poets have classed discord among the furies most hostile to the interests of mankind. The ancients erected temples to concord, as to a most beneficent deity; and we still put up daily prayers for concord, as for one of the greatest of blessings. Nor do we pray for this blessing without reason; for by concord wars are composed, peace is preserved, friendships and alliances are formed and cemented. By concord the harmony of kingdoms, states, cities, and private families, is maintained; while discord dissolves all the social relations, and puts to hazard all the comforts and enjoyments of life. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the advantages of concord, which every body admits, and which, generally speaking, I am not disposed to deny; but still the maxim to which I have alluded, namely, that small establishments thrive by concord, while great ones are destroyed by discord, is not to be taken as indisputable without some limitations. It would be absurd to insist generally on the benefits of discord, nor is it my intention to do so; I shall content myself with pointing out some of the phenomena of concord and discord, from which a judgment may be formed, whether the above-mentioned maxim ought to be understood without limitation.

If we consult the annals of sacred and profane history, or if we take common experience, the best practical instructress, for our guide, we shall see how much mischief has arisen from continued con-

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cord, what clouds of error and calamity have been collected from that source, which the storms of discord have frequently dispersed. During the middle ages the church was in a state of profound peace, but that peace was accompanied with the most barbarous ignorance; it was a sort of putrid gangrene, which could only be removed by the fermentation of discord. A passive acquiescence in all matters of religion was the characteristic of the times; there was no anxiety to investigate the truth, because nothing was controverted. Every man turned his back upon the light of reason, and believed implicitly whatever was obtruded upon him by the Roman pontiffs. Orthodoxy consisted in examining nothing, but paying a blind deference to the dictates of papal authority. Such was the aspect of the Christian republic in those peaceful times; but when the general tranquillity was succeeded by discord and contention, the light, which had been hidden under the ashes of ignorance, burst forth with renewed splendour. The winds, which carried partial destruction in their course, dispersed at the same time the darkness of the intellectual horizon. If we compare the period of peace with that of dissension in the state of the church, it will be evident, that it is better for men to quarrel than to live in a state of brutal concord with each other. Hence, the inconveniences which arise from dissension may be compared with the storms which destroy houses and root up trees in their course, but which at the same time purify the atmosphere, and prevent it from engendering disease.

The effects of discord have been found by the rulers of states to be no less salutary in civil matters; hence the well-known maxim, *divide and govern*. Upon this principle the wisest princes have fomented dissension among their counsellors, and sometimes,

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as circumstances demanded, among their subjects, with a view of providing for their own security. By discord truth has often been revealed, and conspiracies have often been detected; so that even discord and contention may be said to have some share in establishing public tranquillity.

Look at the ancient state of the Roman republic; and you will see, that though the people suffered from the discord, they suffered more from the unanimity of their leaders. The discord of civil wars terminated by the concord of three men, and the establishment of the triumvirate was followed by proscription, murder, the loss of liberty, and the overthrow of the republic.

I pass over many other facts which history would supply in illustration of this subject, and proceed to consider the effect of concord and unanimity among individuals. The people are sure to suffer, says Petronius, when there is a friendly understanding between bakers and the officers whose duty it is to see that the public are not defrauded in the sale of bread; "serve me, and I will serve you," is the maxim on which the tradesman and the overseer are sure to act. Here is one striking instance of the inconveniences of concord. Cato, whose prudence and perspicacity in the management of his domestic affairs were universally acknowledged, was always alarmed when he observed any indications of concord among his servants. Disagreement among subordinate agents is one of the most salutary checks upon fraudulent combinations. I have myself experienced the benefits of a little discord in the management of my estates in the country; and if any disputes arise between my bailiff and my tenants, I rather endeavour to keep them within moderate limits than to terminate them; for I should be sure to suffer if they came to an amicable understanding. It is undoubtedly the duty of a

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master to preserve peace in his family; but experience demonstrates the wisdom of encouraging a certain spirit of rivalry among his servants, since he will by this means frequently be able to arrive at a true knowledge of his affairs; as a judge elicits truth from the disputes of contending advocates.

I might illustrate this proposition by many other examples, but what I have said is sufficient to show that the maxim respecting concord is liable to no light objections. I am aware that many will think I am maintaining a dangerous paradox, the effect of which would be to dissuade from the practice of virtue, and to countenance vice. But let such persons pause before they so hastily condemn me. I admit that concord is a great and highly commendable virtue; I am even ready to class it among the cardinal virtues, and I subscribe entirely to all the praises which have been lavished upon concord, provided it be concord in the promotion of good. But as the majority of mankind are prone to evil, concord is not of such utility as it appears to be to those who imagine men to be not what they are, but what they ought to be. As my argument rests upon this presumption, it will not be found to be inconsistent with reason; for nothing should be constantly desired by men, except that which is constantly useful. He who refuses to acquiesce in this view of the subject, and who maintains that concord among men is uniformly and without limitation to be desired, must be ready to espouse the cause of robbers and assassins. It may be said, that I ought to distinguish between conspiracy and concord. Granted; for I will not quarrel about words, and I admit, that union among bad men may be properly called conspiracy, and union among good men concord. The thing however still remains unaltered, by whatever name we may choose to call it. If virtue were the sole pursuit of

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mankind, or of the greater part of mankind, nothing would be more desirable or commendable than concord; but as the dispositions and pursuits of most men are vicious, my argument will stand good, that amidst this universal corruption it is better that men should be divided, than that they should unite their strength for the perpetration of crime. There are many maxims which, if they be attentively examined, will be found to be supported by the suffrages of the vulgar, rather than by the authority of reason. There is a maxim in law, that every man is to be presumed good until the contrary be shown; but experience convinces us, that in general men are to be presumed good-for-nothing, until the contrary be proved. If this be true, perpetual discord would seem to be more desirable than perpetual agreement, and we shall almost be justified in inverting the maxim about concord, by saying, that bad establishments thrive by concord, and are often destroyed by discord.

Of depraved Taste.

They who complain of the depraved taste of mankind, do not perceive how wisely and providently nature has disposed all things for the best. Many things which appear at first sight to be defects, are discovered upon a more accurate investigation to be salutary dispensations in the system of nature. I have shown, in 'the Journey to the World under Ground,' that the world would be subject to innumerable inconveniences, if there were no fools in it, and that the mixture of an abundance of fools with a few wise men is attended with infinite advantages to society. In like manner the depraved taste of mankind, against which some persons are in the habit of declaiming, has this good effect, that by its operation nothing in this world is wholly without use. It is a wonderful

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promoter of commerce, since it renders every description of commodity saleable; sweet things suiting one man's taste, and bitter another's; one man approving new and fresh articles, and another entertaining a convenient preference for what is antiquated and stinking.

If it were not for the diversity of tastes among mankind, how many shopkeepers might shut up their shops; how many writers, who now enrich themselves by their productions, would be reduced to poverty? Bad taste makes the dullest annals as marketable as the best histories; bad taste is the bookseller's sheet-anchor; for while that prevails, he never despairs of selling ware which, if all men possessed a discriminating judgment, would become food for moths and worms. What would become of Mævius, if the public were generally capable of appreciating good poetry? He must resign his laurels and his income; from a popular poet he must become a hungry versifier; he must be content to see productions consigned to the trunk-maker, which now are to be met with every where glittering in Morocco, or exhaling the perfume of Russia.

The bad taste of mankind, which is so much condemned, is in fact the axis on which the whole mechanism of life turns; it lightens toil, it promotes commerce, it relieves poverty, it nourishes hope, it provides against most of the evils to which human nature is liable. Its use in marriages is well known; if all men were possessed of good taste, virgins who happen to be destitute of the advantages of beauty or fortune would be condemned, like the daughter of Jephtha, to bewail their virginity for ever. But as one man is fond of youth, and another has a predilection for antiquity; as one man delights in beauty, and another sees charms in ugliness; as one man prefers a fair, and

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another a brown complexion; no woman, whether maid or widow, young or old, beautiful or frightful, need despair of obtaining a husband. Theodora, with her pug-nose and her blear eyes, might have languished in perpetual virginity, if Philander had not possessed the taste of a Hottentot. Look at the son of Doricula: his existence is a monument of the taste of Lysippus for poverty and deformity.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we may observe instances of the salutary effects of depraved taste. How many individuals would starve, how many citizens would be deprived of their honours and distinctions, if the taste of the societies and states to which they belong were uncorrupted! Depraved taste has elevated many a man to honours and emoluments, in despite of his natural imbecility and incompetence. How could Theodorus have become a magistrate, or Martinus a senator, or Titus a judge, had it not been for depraved taste? To wish for the extinction of bad taste would, in fact, be to desire the ruin of half mankind.

The Wise alone are Happy.

The title of this chapter is at any rate orthodox; and if my former dissertations have given offence, I shall now appear to have abandoned paradox, and to have regained the beaten track of morality. I object as much as any man to paradoxes, when they are maintained only from a desire of innovation; and I am ready to subscribe to the arguments of the Stoics, and especially to those of Cicero, on the subject of this chapter. What man in his senses can deny that they alone are rich, free, and happy, who despise riches, who govern their passions, and whose tranquillity no accidents can disturb? Who can deny that they are truly the victims of misery, slavery, and poverty, who are enslaved by their own passions, who are afflicted by the slightest

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accidents, and who in the midst of affluence endure, like Tantalus, the pangs of thirst and hunger? On this subject there shall be no dispute between us; I follow the stream, and pronounce with the Stoics that the wise alone are happy. One little scruple however remains, which I must beg you to remove by defining your wise man. I have no doubt in the world about the happiness of wise men; all I doubt is, whether there are in the nature of things such wise men as the Stoics imagine; whether, in short, the wise men of the Stoics are true, substantial, *bonâ fide* beings. I know that we are men, and therefore that nothing incident to humanity can be foreign to our nature, or a matter of indifference to us. I by no means agree with those, says Crantor, one of the most distinguished philosophers of the Stoical school, who extol that kind of apathy which neither can nor ought to exist. We are not made of stone, but there is a certain soft and susceptible principle in our nature, which is agitated by sorrow as by a storm. We see therefore, from the confession of this Stoic, that all the boasted firmness and apathy of the school to which he belonged, exists rather in the imagination of philosophers than in human nature. The happiness which they assign to the wise alone, is rather the companion of folly than of wisdom. I will illustrate this proposition by comparing the fool with the wise man; not indeed the wise man of the Stoics, but such as he can be fairly conceived to be among men composed of flesh and blood. Wise men are subject to innumerable inconveniences which are referable wholly to the superiority of their understanding; for, as they know exactly what they are capable, and what they are incapable of accomplishing, as they are acquainted with their own merits and defects, as they have a clearer perception of things past, present, and to come,

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than the majority of mankind, they are conscious of the errors they may have already committed, and they are apprehensive about those of which they may in future be guilty. Hence remorse, penitence, fear, anxiety, take rooted possession of their minds, and destroy the happiness which is derived from serenity of temper. They reproach themselves for every act of imprudence they commit; and if they accomplish any thing meritorious, they discover some imperfection in it, they think it might have been done better, they tacitly condemn themselves, and dread the criticism of others; so that their very intellectual superiority seems to preclude them from reaping any solid enjoyment from their own achievements. Aristotle was so little satisfied with his works, that on his death-bed he wished all the treasures of erudition they contain to be committed to oblivion. The same anxiety afflicted Virgil, who thought the poem which we regard as a divine composition, fit only to be committed to the flames. A prudent general seldom snores, like Alexander the Great, in the moment of danger; and a wise minister hesitates before he decides, and feels all the anxiety inseparable from prudent counsels, in delivering his opinions. Fools are tormented by none of these cares; if they fail in any attempt, they blame fortune; if they commit any imprudence, they are not sensible of their folly, but, while the public hoot them, they applaud themselves. If any thing they say or do is censured, they impute the censure to calumny or bad taste. The laughter with which fools accompany their observations, indicates their own delight and self-complacency; and if you yawn at their imbecilities, they conclude that you have not caught the point of their witticism, and they feel compassion for your dulness. If they write poems or histories, they believe that Homer and Livy have only the advantage of them because they are

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a few centuries older. Who then can deny that this self-love is a source of delight to fools, unless he denies that the pleasures of dreamers are actual pleasures? If fools do not possess merit, they believe they possess it; and this persuasion is nearly equivalent to the possession of it: for as an imaginary invalid labours in reality under a species of disease, so imaginary possession, as long as the imagination lasts, is equivalent to actual possession. A fool may be compared with the patient who imagined that his ears were perpetually soothed with celestial music, and who, having been cured of this imagination, threatened to bring his physician to trial for robbery, instead of consenting to pay his bill; or he may be compared with the mad citizen of Athens, who rejoiced whenever he saw any ships enter the Piræus, as he believed that they were all his private property. Thus fools perpetually lay the unction of adulation to their own breasts; they admire themselves from crown to toe; they are invariably satisfied with the dignity of their demeanour, the beauty of their features, the symmetry of their form; they perceive none of their imperfections, they are in love even with their deformities. Eager in the pursuit of empty titles, they are incapable of distinguishing between true and false glory; they embrace a cloud for a divinity; they mistake the shadow for the substance. If they perceive that they are despised and excluded from public offices, they attribute their exclusion to envy, and they do not lament their own lot so much as that of the state, which oppresses merit, or is incapable of discerning it. Thus folly has a far stronger security than wisdom against all the assaults of fortune. Philosophers talk of wisdom as a shield against adversity, and they tell us, that the wise armed with this shield are alone happy, rich, and powerful; but if they were required to

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point out the persons whom they describe in these glowing colours, they could scarcely find a couple of individuals who would answer to the picture, who would be prepared to meet all the assaults of fortune with indifference, and to die, singing like swans, in a strain of placid acquiescence in their fate. Look at Cicero, look at Seneca, two of the most eloquent painters of philosophical virtues; the former of these you will find occasionally giving way to unmanly sorrow, the latter trembling with fear and apprehension, and both earnestly engaged in the pursuit of honours and emoluments. But, admitting the existence of a few practical philosophers, the instances are rare, and at best equivocal; while experience furnishes us with an ample list of those who have flourished, and who continue to flourish, under auspices of folly.

They who defend the maxim of the Stoics, rely upon two arguments, one derived from the mental imbecility of fools, the other from the contempt with which fools are treated. I persuade myself that I have sufficiently proved the weakness of the first of these arguments, and the second appears to me to be equally untenable; for they who talk of the despised condition of fools, know nothing of the history and manners of the times, but speak in opposition to daily experience. A philosopher being asked, whether he would give the preference to wisdom or wealth, if he had his choice of those gifts, is said to have replied, 'that he should prefer wisdom, if he did not see so many hungry philosophers seek a place at the tables of fools.' Examine the state of society, compare the condition of wise men with that of fools; and you will find, that while the former steer all their lives amidst rocks and shoals, the latter come at once into port with full sails. A man's progress is impeded by envy and hatred precisely in proportion to his merit; for

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all men conspire against virtue, and the road to honour is cut off from the wise, because they prove themselves worthy of distinction. They meet with the same treatment as those who excel preeminently in games, against whom all inferior players are in the habit of combining. Fools, on the contrary, have none of these difficulties to contend with; they are favoured by all, because they are destitute of the qualities which usually excite envy; and they obtain distinctions without opposition, simply because they are unworthy of them. Hence artful aspirants to honours have sometimes carefully avoided displaying any superior endowments, that they might more easily succeed in obtaining the objects of their ambition. Sixtus the Fifth obtained the papal crown by affecting infirmity of mind and body; and the dulness of Claudius opened the way for him to the imperial throne, for he would never have been suffered to live, had he discovered the least indication of virtue or talent under the reign of Caligula.

An examination of ecclesiastical history will convince us, that the condition of the wise, with reference to religious considerations, is subject even to still greater disadvantages, as compared with that of fools. Men of superior understanding, conceiving that the light of reason is given to them by God for the purpose of investigating truth, examine the grounds of their belief with scrupulous anxiety, and if, in the progress of their inquiries, they see reason to differ in any degree from common opinions, what are the rewards which await their labours? Persecution, proscription, denial of the rites of burial; and, if the power of their persecutors were equal to their benevolence, eternal damnation. On the other hand, the indolent, who will not think, lest their repose should be disturbed—or fools, who cannot investigate from the obtuseness of their facul-

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ties, pass for exemplary, orthodox, and devout Christians. The indolent and the stupid obtain most easily the reputation of piety; they are loved during their lives, their deaths are lamented, they are often celebrated in song, and sometimes admitted into the catalogue of saints. I am ready to admit, that if Stoics can patiently and even cheerfully endure all the hatred, envy, and proscription, to which the possession of superior understanding is calculated to expose them, they may still be the happy persons they are represented to be; but as experience proves that there are very few heroes of this description in the world, and that such invincible fortitude exceeds for the most part the powers and capabilities of our nature, the argument of the Stoical philosophers falls to the ground. Cicero has himself observed, that he who can regard with indifference the objects which affect the rest of mankind with desire or apprehension, must be endowed with more than human fortitude.

The arguments which I have opposed to the maxim which ascribes happiness to superior wisdom, may at first sight appear trifling; but if they be attentively considered, they will be found to be perfectly orthodox. I assent to the truth of that proposition; but I doubt the existence of heroes whose tranquillity can be disturbed by no accidents, whose serenity can be clouded by no misfortunes. I admit that some men are formed of better clay than others; but we are all formed of clay, and this heroic virtue therefore, of which philosophers boast, is a mere creature of the imagination. This being the case, the maxim may, with all due reverence for orthodox opinions, be inverted, and it may with greater truth be asserted, *that fools alone are happy.*

From these dissertations it may be seen what sort of a system of ethics I should have written, if

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I could have been induced to publish such a work. But I shall never engage in so hazardous an undertaking; for the prejudices which men have once imbibed become in the progress of time so rooted and inveterate, that the writer who ventures to introduce new opinions, and who endeavours to remove the obstructions which intercept the intellectual vision of mankind, is sure to be denounced as a mad innovator. The foregoing specimen may serve to attract attention to some propositions which deserve perhaps to be examined; it must be admitted at any rate, that my paradox as to the equal condition of mankind is more plausible than the paradox of the Stoics, which affirms that all offences are equal. But I have enlarged too much on this subject, and I will proceed therefore to bring the account of my studies to a close.

I am so ignorant of medicine, that I have never acquired even the most elementary parts of the science. I do not, however, neglect the care of my body, on the support of which the vigour of the mind depends; but I follow my own judgment rather than the advice of physicians, since I am better acquainted with my own constitution than any other men can be, even though they may be masters of their profession. I acknowledge the efficacy of some herbs, and I approve of the zeal of medical men in endeavouring to detect curative properties in new medicines; but the truth is, as a celebrated physician has observed, that the constitution of the human body is a sort of territory of which we know nothing. This makes the study of medicine vague and uncertain; and for this reason I neither give, nor am able to give, advice to others who labour under disease; but in managing my own complaints I think myself more learned than Hippocrates. Continued sickness for a period of nearly forty years has supplied me with information

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which no other man can possess. I know by experience what suits my own constitution; but the same thing which is of service to me, may be injurious to others labouring under the same complaint; since it is not enough to know the symptoms of diseases, but we must also be intimately acquainted with the peculiarities of the system in which those diseases are found. Indeed, if I were to practise as a physician, I should attempt only by a sort of negative treatment; I should ask my patients, for instance, what sort of food generally agreed best with them; and if they told me that they enjoyed their health best by eating lime or sand, and by taking no other beverage than japan ink, I should desire them to persist in living upon those delicacies.

I have always cultivated music; in my youth, with enthusiasm, and with a more moderate ardour in my advanced years. I have the same opinion of music as of some other arts, that it has been rather impaired than improved by attempts to refine it. The musicians of our time have for some years past shown a distaste for melody, and now they seem desirous of getting rid of it altogether. Their great object seems to be to render music as dissonant, as noisy, and as difficult, as possible. The more difficult a composition is, the greater is the praise lavished on the composer; and there can be little doubt that, if this system is continued, the art will perish altogether. I am aware that credit should be given to the opinions of artists in their own professions, and that the same thing may be said of music as of paintings, in which judges of the art see and admire beauties which may either be unnoticed or condemned as defects by ordinary observers. But the prevailing corrupt taste in music has shed a baneful influence on the art. This is acknowledged by the best artists themselves, who

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accommodate themselves to the reigning taste, because they find that pretenders to science yawn over legitimate compositions. The best music is, in my opinion, that which pleases the scientific, and at the same time does not offend the ears of a general audience. Music and harmony are co-existent; if the latter be banished, the former cannot subsist without it.

I believe I have now given a candid and unreserved account of my life, my manners, my studies, my faults, and—if I have any—my virtues. If any of my readers have found me too prolix, they must pardon me on the score of my advanced age, which is naturally loquacious. There are, no doubt, many things which deserve to be censured in these pages, but I trust that there is also something which deserves to be approved. It is now time that I should sound a retreat, and devote the remaining portion of existence which may be allotted to me, to the care of my body and the amendment of my life. The latter is an obligation which I conceive to be imperative, as I may consider myself on the eve of taking a journey to another world; and the former is a duty which should not be neglected, for in old age the vigour of the body is soon destroyed, if oil be not frequently poured into the lamp.

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ERRATA.

Page 128.	line	17.	*for*	Alenanach	*read*	Almanack
„	„	20.	„	superstitions	„	superstition
139.	„	6.	from the bottom	Impromptu	„	L'Impromptu
141.	in 4 places			Breneypen	„	Breneyssen
152.	„	4.	from the bottom	disparities	„	disposition
167.	„	9.	„	rebellion	„	rebellions
173.	first word			suffered	„	supposed
177.	line	2.	from the bottom	part	„	pert,
183.	„	25.	„	preserve	„	pursue
193.	„	19.	„	philosophy	„	phraseology
202.	„	21.	*for*	offered to the senses	„	opposed to the evidence of the senses
206.	„	11.	„	a part	„	the part
217.	„	3.	after	published	„	during the last
226.	„	25.	dele	consider		

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